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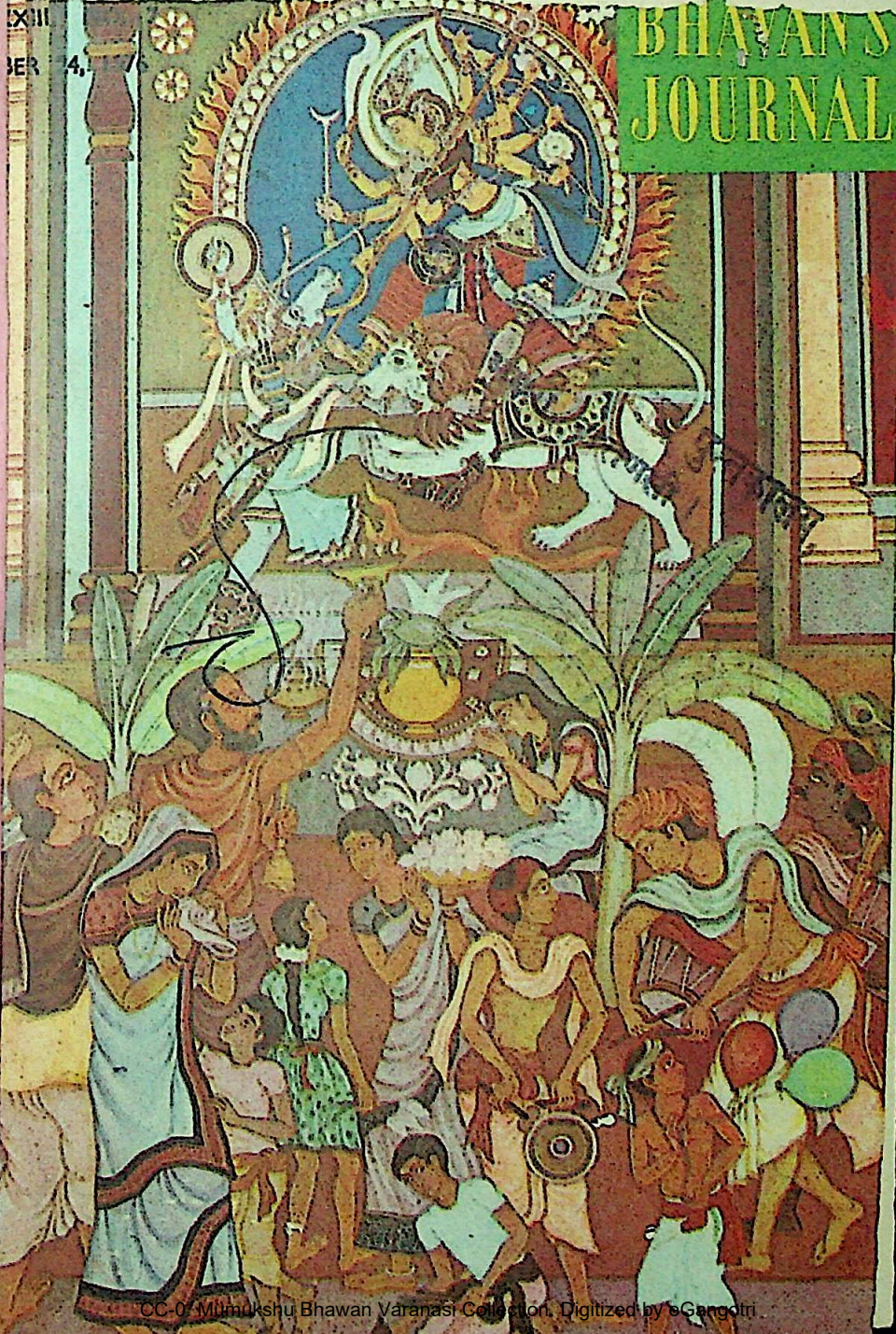

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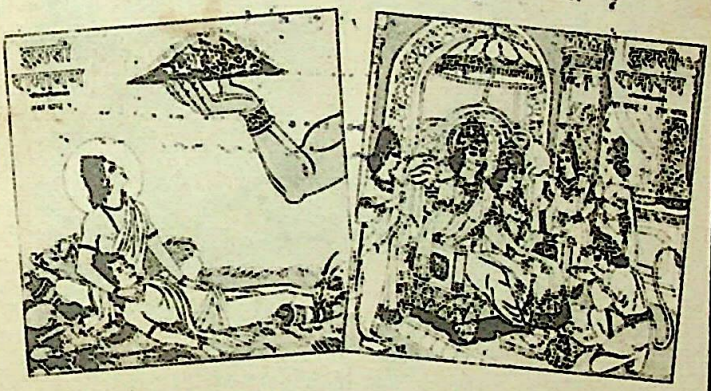

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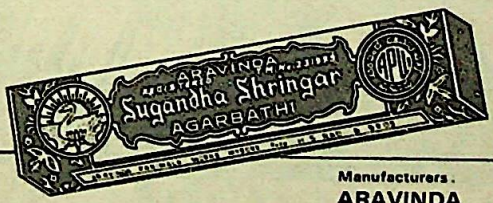

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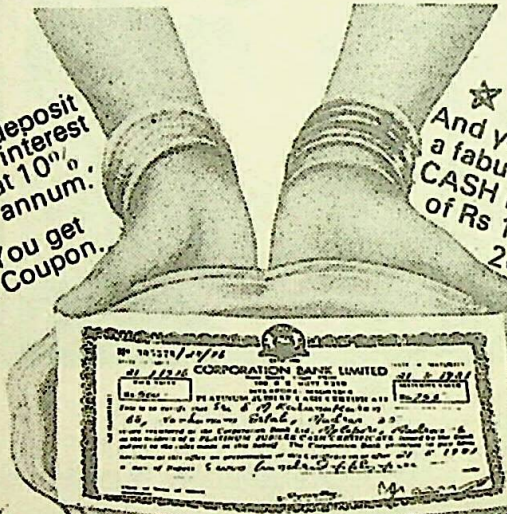

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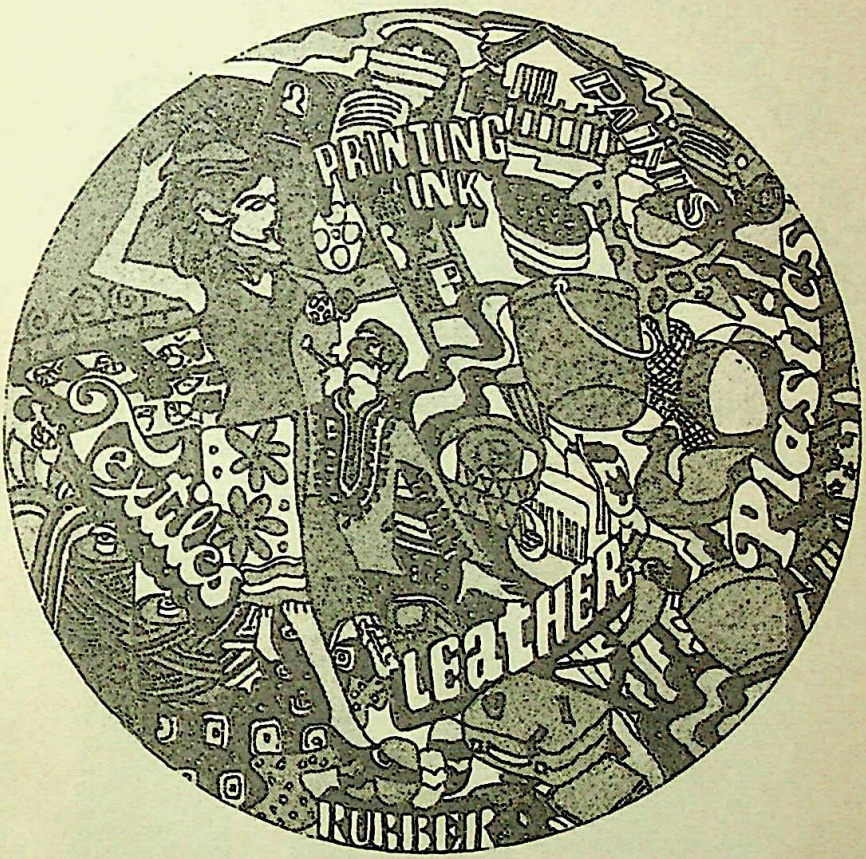

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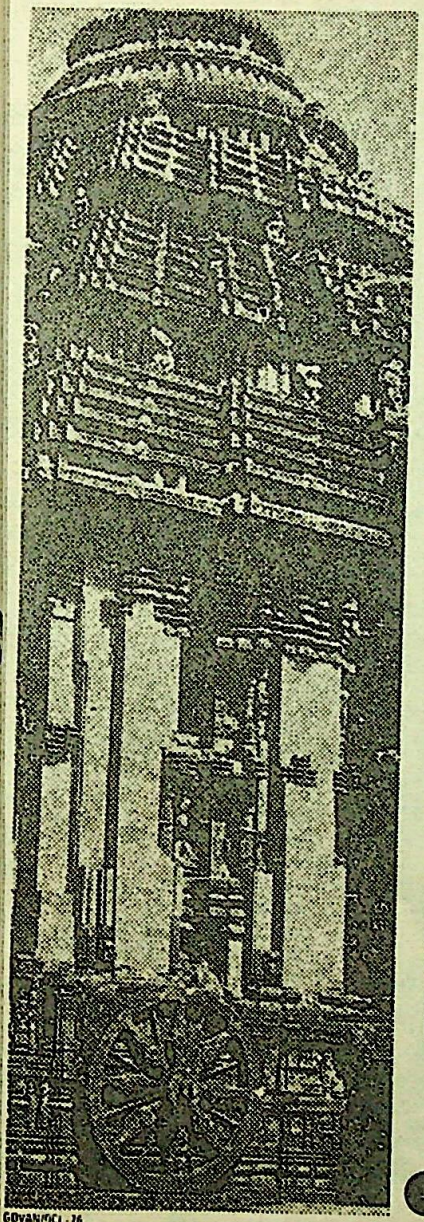

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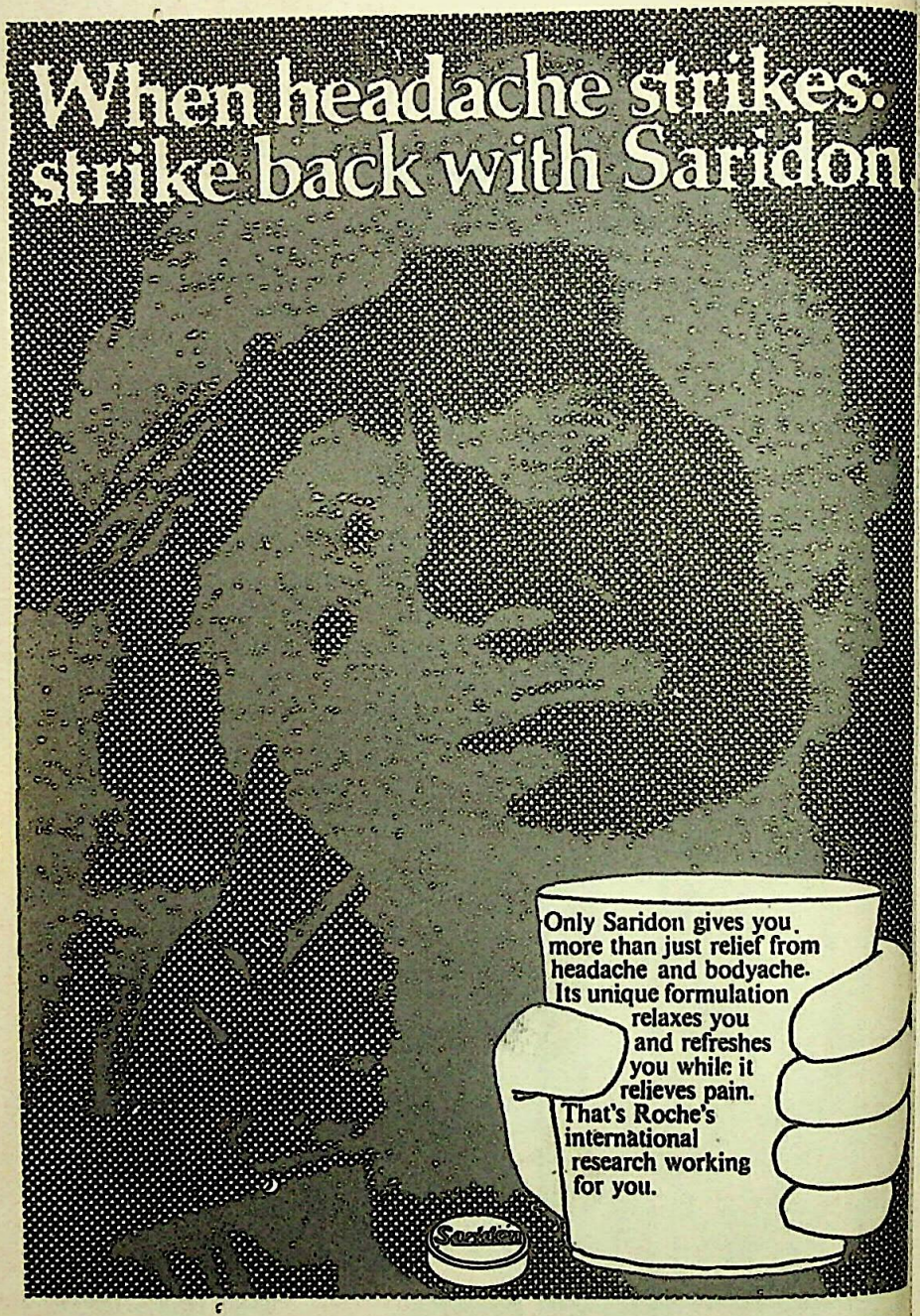

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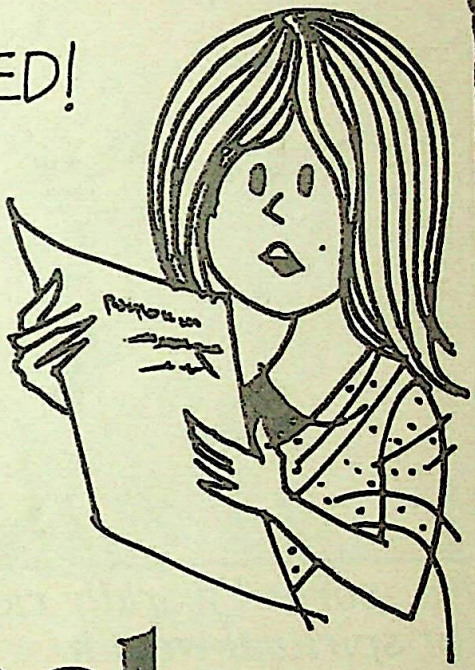

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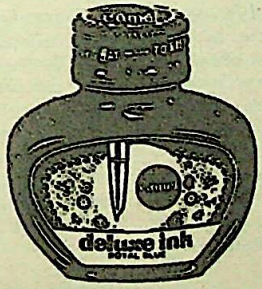

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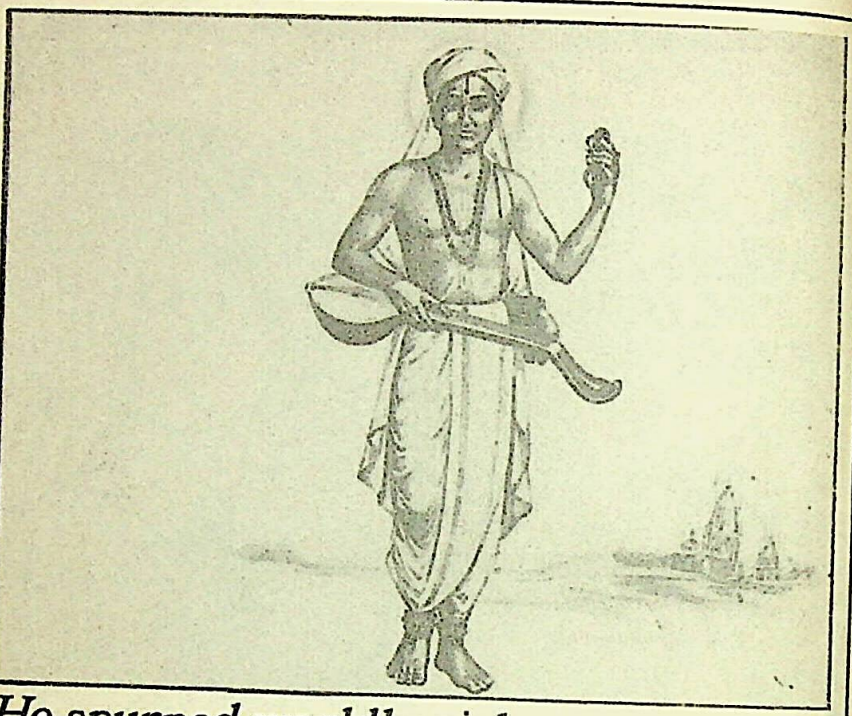

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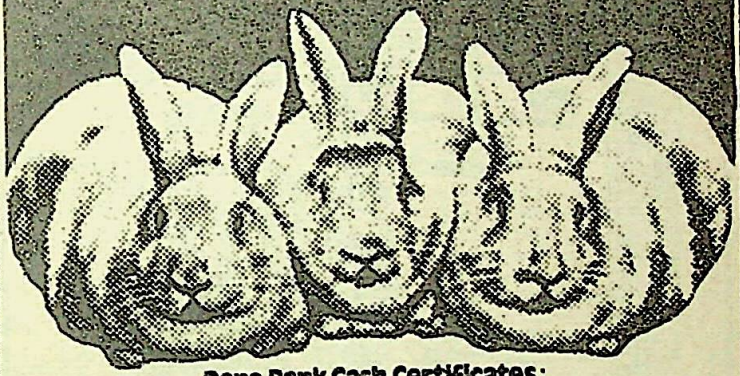

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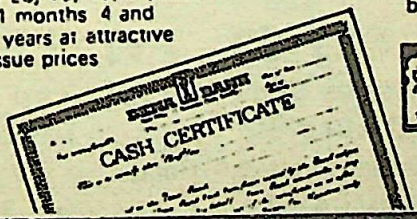

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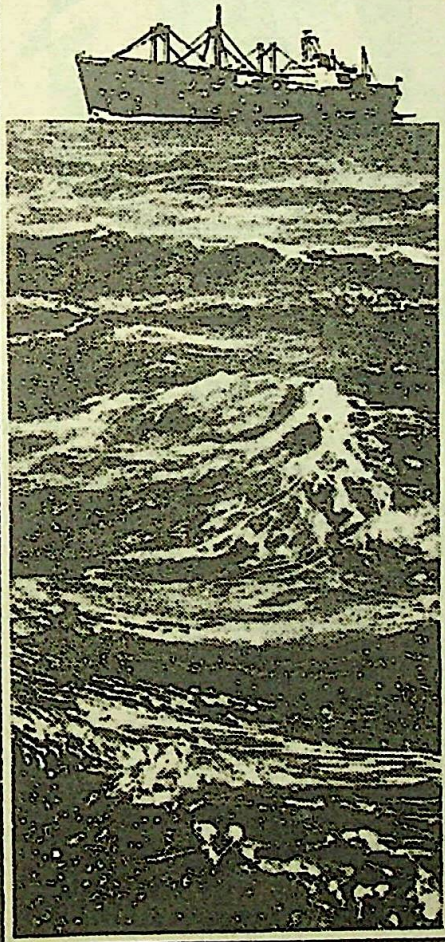

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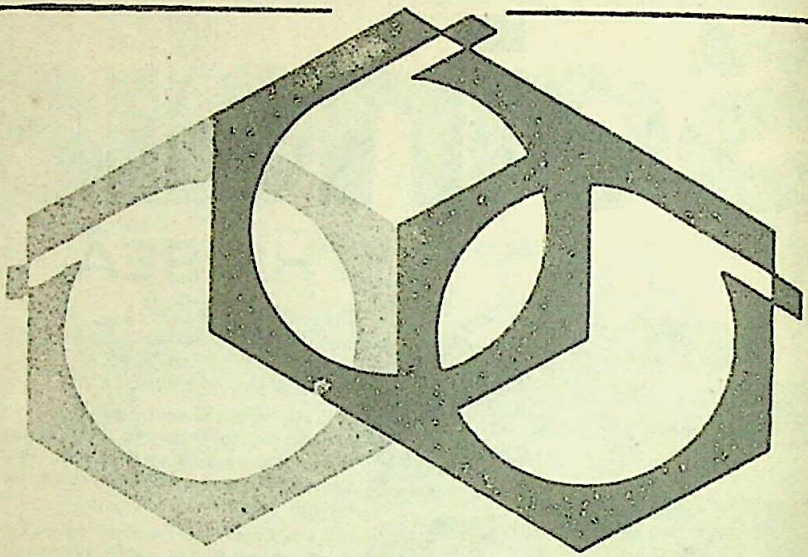

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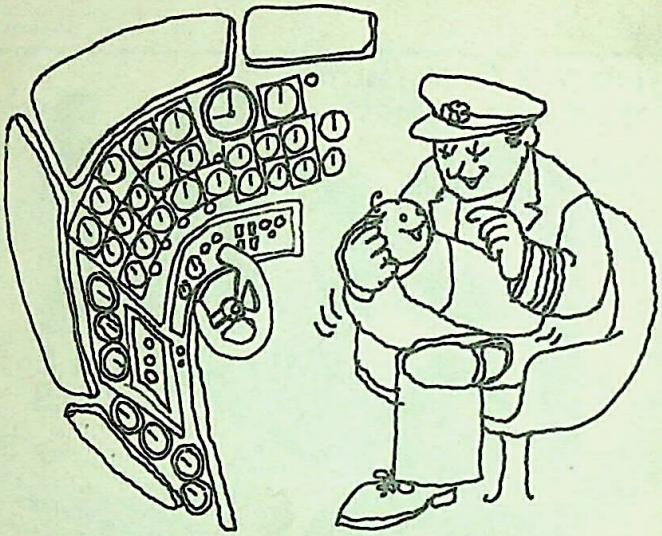

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Vol. XXIII, No. 7
OCTOBER 24, 1976

BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

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FRONT COVER: Mother Divine
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VOL. XXIII, No 7

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।
Let noble thoughts come to us from every side
Rigveda I-89-i

BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

PRAYER TO DEVI

देवि प्रपन्नार्तिहरे प्रसीद
प्रसीद मातर्जगतोऽखिलस्य ।
प्रसीद विश्वेश्वरि पाहि विश्वं
त्वमीश्वरी देवि चराचरस्य ।।

Devimahatmya, XI, 3.

O Goddess, remover of miseries of thy supplicants, Mother and Controller of the Universe! Shower Thy mercy and protect all of us in the Universe. Thou art the ruler of the moving and the non-moving.

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Greetings

OF all the religious festivals observ in our country, Diwali—the Festi of Lights—is most significant both what it symbolises and as regards uniqueness.

The festival is in the nature of thank giving for the triumph of good over e and its uniqueness lies in the universal of its appeal to one and all in Bhara Varsha.

It provides an opportunity for all put away their cares, anxieties and jo in joyous abandon in the festivities.

The occasion also serves as a remind for all right-minded persons to keep hefo their minds the need to observe Dharm *in their pursuit of happiness—*Artha a Kama. *Bereft of* Dharma, *pursuit* Artha *and* Kama *is sure to lead to ruin*

May I extend greetings and good wish to all the members of the Bhavan's fa flung family and the lakhs of readers a well-wishers of the "Bhavan's Journal in India and abroad?

Dharamsey M. Khata

(Dharamsey M. Khatau
President.

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Echoes from Eternity

Recorded in the pages that follow are a few Echoes from Eternity—not feeble, moribund voices from the dim, distant past but powerful messages true for all ages and that inspire man in every age and every land.

And indeed it is true of these Echoes from Eternity that paradoxically the march of time only makes them more and more audible because the world is becoming smaller and smaller with the march of science and technology and with that greatest of all explosions, viz. the explosion of knowledge.

The revolution that has taken place in the field of trade and commerce with the opening up of trade routes on land, sea and air, certainly augurs well for humanity because the best of things are available to man—be it medicine or a car. Yes. The barriers of distance have been overcome by man, the modern man.

And in the world of ideas, the greatest of all barriers—the barrier of language and communication—has been admirably and appreciably overcome by the ingenuity of the modern man.

Result? Today a man in America can listen and react to the Message of the Upanishads, a message delivered in the hoary past and in an alien tongue, Sanskrit. And is not this true of every other Inspired Message from whatever worthy heritage—be it the message of Prophet Mohammed, Jesus Christ, Gautama Buddha, Zoroaster, Sri Krishna, Sri Rama?

If the latest discoveries in the field of science and medicine can be shared by all people to their best advantage, it indeed is no small thing to share the grandest of discoveries made by sages and saints and prophets and godmen in all parts of the world.

This then is a small attempt to bring to focus the Echoes from Eternity *as the precious heritage of mankind and not as the exclusive property of any one region, religion or race.*

Religions should not *compete with each other but should complement each other. This is the time spirit.*

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The Good and the Pleasant

The Choice is Yours

THE good is one thing, the pleasant is another. These two, having different purposes tempt a man. Of these two, it is well for him who takes hold of the good; he who chooses the pleasant misses his end.

The good and the pleasant approach a man; the wise man considers and distinguishes the two. Wisely does he prefer the good to the pleasant, but a fool chooses the pleasant for its worldly good.

You, O Nachiketas, have, after examining, rejected the pleasures that are delightful or seem to be so. You have not taken the road that leads to wealth in which many men perish.

—*Kathopanishad*

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Axe and the Sandal Tree

In the immortal Ramacharitamanasa, *a classic composition of Sant Tulasidas, occurs this passage in which Sri Rama, at the request of Bharata, explains the qualities of saints:*

"MARK, brother, even when the axe cuts down a sandal tree, the latter perfumes the axe by imparting its fragrance to it.

"For this reason, sandalwood, in the form of paste, adorns the very foreheads of gods and is very much valued by the world while the axe has its steel edge heated in the fire and beaten with a hammer as punishment.

"Saints as a rule have no hankering for the pleasures of sense and are the very mines of amiability and other virtues. They grieve to see others in distress and rejoice at the sight of others' joy.

"They are even-minded, look upon none as their enemy and are free from vanity and passion; they are conquerers of greed, anger, pleasure and fear.

"Tender of heart and compassionate to the distressed, they cherish guileless devotion to Me in thought, word and deed; and giving honour to all, they are modest themselves.

"Such souls, Bharata, are dear to Me as life.

"They never swerve from the control of their mind and senses, religious observances and correct behaviour and never utter a harsh word.

"They who regard both obloquy and praise alike and who claim My lotus feet, as their only possession—such saintly souls are dear to Me as life and are veritable abodes of noble qualities and embodiments of bliss."

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Sri Krishna enumerates virtues to Uddhava

A Selection from Srimad Bhagavatam

THE greatest gift is the gift of knowledge.

Calmness is a steady flow of the mind toward God.

Self-restraint is control of the organs of sense.

Patience is bearing the burden of life cheerfully.

Steadiness is overcoming the palate and the impulse of sex.

Valour is the conquest of one's own self.

Truthfulness is true and agreeable speech as exemplified by the sages.

Renunciation is overcoming the world.

Wisdom is removing false ideas of multiplicity and realizing the unity of the Self.

Modesty is abhorrence of evil deeds.

Excellence of character arises from disregard of wordly considerations.

Happiness is the transcending of both pleasure and pain.

Misery is hankering after pleasures of sense.

Learned is he who discriminates between bondage and freedom.

Ignorant is he who identifies himself with the body.

The right path is that which leads to Me.

The wrong path is that which causes restlessness of the mind.

He indeed is rich who is rich in virtues.

Mean is he who is not master of his senses.

Godly is he who is not attached to objects of sense.

Divine is he who has overcome both good and evil.

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Hasten to do Good

LET no man think lightly of good saying in his heart: It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water drops a water-pot is filled; the wise man becomes full of good, even if he gather it little by little.

Let a man avoid evil deeds, as a merchant, if he has few companions and carries much wealth, avoids a dangerous road; a man who loves life avoids poison.

He who has no wound on his hand may touch poison with his hand; poison does not affect one who has no wound; nor is there evil for one who does not commit evil.

If a man offend a harmless, pure and innocent person the evil falls back upon that fool, like light dust thrown up against the wind.

Some people are born again; evil-doers go to hell; righteous people go to heaven; those who are free from all worldly desires attain Nirvana.

Not in the sky, not in the midst of the sea, not if we enter into the clefts of the mountains, is there known a spot in the whole world where a man might be freed from an evil deed.

Not in the sky, not in the midst of the sea, not if we enter into the clefts of the mountains, is there known a spot in the whole world where death could not overcome the mortal.

—*Buddha*

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These Seven are Beloved of God

THERE are seven people whom God will draw under His own shadow, on that Day when there will be no other shadow:

One a just king; another, who hath employed himself in devotion from his youth; the third, who fixed his heart on the Mosque till he return to it; the fourth, two men whose friendship is to please God, whether together or separate; the fifth, a man who remembereth God when he is alone, and weepeth; the sixth, a man who is tempted by a rich and beautiful woman, and sayeth, 'Verily I fear God!,' the seventh, a man who hath given alms and concealed it, so that his left hand knoweth not what his right doeth.

The most excellent of all actions is to befriend any one on God's account, and to be at enmity with whosoever is the enemy of God.

—Prophet Mohammed

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Pray in Private

WHEN you pray, do not be like the show-offs! They love to stand up and pray in the meeting houses and on the street corners so that everybody will see them. Remember this! They have already been paid in full.

But when you pray, go to your room and close the door, and pray to your Father who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you.

In your prayers do not use a lot of words, as the pagans do, who think that God will hear them because of their long prayers. Do not be like them.

God is your Father and he already knows what you need before you ask him. This is the way you should pray:

Our Father in heaven!

May your name be kept holy,

May your Kingdom come,

May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need;

Forgive us what we owe you as we forgive what others owe us;

Do not bring us to hard testing, but keep us safe from the Evil One.

For, if you forgive others the wrong they have done you, your Father in heaven will forgive you.

But if you do not forgive others, then your Father in heaven will not forgive the wrongs you have done.

—*Jesus Christ*

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The Zoroastrian Law of Purity

Ahura Mazda spake: O Zarathustra! Purity is the best thing for a man from his very birth. That purity is the Mazdyasnian Law. Any man can purify his heart by Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds.

With the highest purity and with the best purity, may we unite with Thee (O Ahura Mazda!) and enter into Eternal Friendship with Thee.

Purity is the highest Blessing, Happiness. Happiness is to him who is Pure for the sake of the best Purity.

Give me, Thou Omniscient Lord, the benefits of both the worlds—(this which is) physical, and (that which is) spiritual, which are obtained through Purity, through which I may obtain the bliss-giving happiness.

In this house (body) may stubbornness be overcome by submission, discord by peace, miserliness by liberality, ignorance by wisdom, falsehood by truth.

I drive away disloyalty and evil thought, O Ahura Mazda! from Thee by the power of prayer.

I dispel from my own self, O Ahura Mazda! with the instrumentality of prayer my arrogance towards my relatives, my deceitfulness towards my co-workers, my contempt towards my subordinates, and my neglect in the feeding of my cattle.

Courtesy: "The Zorastrian Law of Purity"

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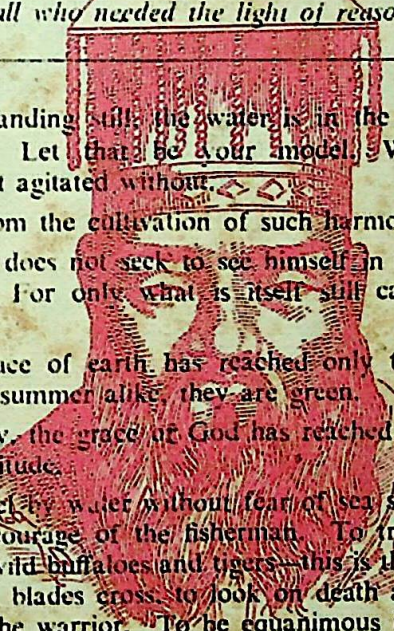
A Lesson from Water

Confucius, the celebrated Chinese philosopher, (551-479 B.C.), was, like the Greek philosopher Socrates, a walking disseminator of wisdom to all who needed the light of reason.



WHEN standing still the water is in the most perfect state of repose. Let that be your model. What remains quietly within is not agitated without.

It is from the cultivation of such harmony that virtue results.

A man does not seek to see himself in running water, but in still water. For only what is itself still can instil stillness into others.

The grace of earth has reached only the pines and cedars. Winter and summer alike, they are green.

Similarly, the grace of God has reached only those who have attained rectitude.

To travel by water without fear of sea serpents and dragon—this is the courage of the fisherman. To travel by land without fear of the wild buffaloes and tigers—this is the courage of hunters. When bright blades cross, to look on death as on life—this is the courage of the warrior. To be equanimous in the face of success or failure and to remain fearless in times of great danger—this is the courage of the sage.

From divergent aims come restlessness; from restlessness comes worry, and from worry one reaches the stage of being beyond hope. The sages of old first strengthened their own character before they tried to strengthen that of others.

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Mother Divine

H. H. JAGADGURU SRI SANKARACHARYA OF KANCHI

WE all take great care to keep our bodies and our clothes clean. We wish to avoid falling ill. But this attention to our bodies and clothes only refers to external cleanliness.

While it is necessary to be clean in body, it is more important to attend to internal cleanliness. But we do not bestow much attention on that. Impurity of the mind is more baneful than impurity of the body.

The things which cause the mind to be impure are desire, anger and fear. These produce evil thoughts in the mind. The mind gets fouled by them.

It is common knowledge that when a person is in the presence of his mother, no evil thoughts arise in his mind. What is true of our physical mother is much more true in the case of the Divine Mother.

We cleanse our bodies by bathing in water. Our minds are cleansed by bathing it in *dhyana tirtha,* the holy water of meditation on the Divine Mother.

A mind cleansed like this would learn to distinguish the real from the unreal. This knowledge would destroy desire for what is unreal. It would promote detachment. Where there is no desire, there will be no anger or fear. That would lead to the fullness of joy and lasting peace. That again will result in the end of births.

A day spent without a conscious attempt to cleanse one's heart and mind is a day wasted. Impurity of cloth or body would lead to diseases which would last only for one life-time. But impurity of heart would lead to diseases which would afflict the soul for several births.

God is one. We worship Him as the Father or as the Mother and as the Guru.

God in the form of the Divine Mother is the personification of kindness and love to all creatures who are all children of the Mother. Whoever worships at Her divine feet would secure peace quickly.

We should surrender ourselves at the feet of the Divine Mother and purify ourselves with her *dhyana tirtha.* That is the only way to get rid of desires, diseases and births.

Courtesy: The Call of the Jagadguru

Now follows a 16-page feature on the manifold aspects of the Mother Divine, with 14 illustrations corresponding to 14 slokas from "Devi Mahatmya."

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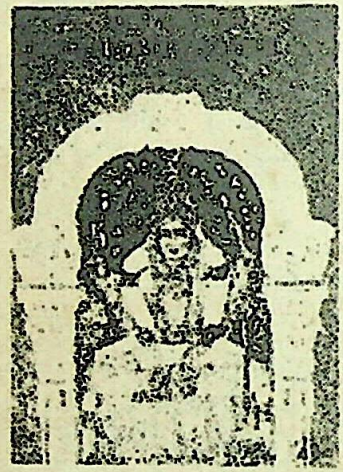

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MANIFOLD ASPECTS OF MOTHER DURGA

The manifold aspects of the Divine Mother as described in the 11th Chapter of the sacred "Devi Mahatmya" or "Durga Saptasati" are illustrated in this feature. The English rendering of the verses is by Swami Jagadisvarananda.

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देव्या हते तत्र महासुरेन्द्रे
सेन्द्राः सुरा वह्निपुरोगमास्ताम् ।
कात्यायनीं तुष्टुवुरिष्टलाभाद्
विकासिवक्त्राब्जविकासिताशाः ॥ १ ॥

When the great lord of asuras (Sumbha) was slain by Devi, Indra and the other devas, led by Agni, with their object fulfilled and their cheerful faces illumining the quarters, praised Katyayani. (See opening picture)

सर्वमङ्गलमाङ्गल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधिके ।
शरण्ये त्र्यम्बके गौरि नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ २ ॥

Salutation be to you O Narayani, O you who are the good of all good, O auspicious Devi, who accomplish every object, the giver of refuge, O three-eyed Gauri!

हंसयुक्तविमानस्थे ब्रह्माणीरूपधारिणि ।
कौशाम्भःक्षरिके देवि नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ३ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who ride in the heavenly chariot yoked with swans and assume, O Devi, the form of Brahmani, who sprinkles water with Kusa grass.

त्रिशूलचन्द्राहिधरे महावृषभवाहिनि ।
माहेश्वरीस्वरूपेण नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ४ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who bear the trident, the moon and the serpent, and ride a big bull, and have the form of Mahesvari.

मयूरकुक्कुटवृते महाशक्तिधरेऽनघे ।
कौमारीरूपसंस्थाने नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ५ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who are attended by peacock and cock, and who bear a great spear, O you, who are sinless and who take the form of Kaumari.

शङ्खचक्रगदाशार्ङ्गगृहीतपरमायुधे ।
प्रसीद वैष्णवीरूपे नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ६ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who hold the great weapons of conch, discus, club and bow, and take the form of Vaishnavi, be gracious.

गृहीतोग्रमहाचक्रे दंष्ट्रोद्धृतवसुन्धरे ।
वराहरूपिणि शिवे नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ७ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who grasp a huge formidable discus, and uplift the earth with thy tusk, O auspicious Devi, who have a boar-like form.

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नृसिंहरूपेणोग्रेण हन्तुं दैत्यान् कृतोद्यमे ।
त्रैलोक्यत्राणसहिते नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ८ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who, in the fierce form of a man-lion, put forth your efforts to slay the daityas, O you who possess the benevolence of saving the three worlds.

किरीटिनि महावज्रे सहस्रनयनोज्ज्वले ।
वृत्रप्राणहरे चैन्द्रि नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ९ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, you who have a diadem and a great thunderbolt, are dazzling with a thousand eyes, and took away the life of Vritra, O Aindri!

शिवदूतीस्वरूपेण हतदैत्यमहाबले ।
घोररूपे महारावे नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ १० ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who in the form of Sivaduti slew the mighty hosts of daityas, O you of terrible form and tremendous noise.

दंष्ट्राकरालवदने शिरोमालाविभूषणे ।
चामुण्डे मुण्डमथने नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ ११ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who have terrible face with tusks, and who are adorned with a garland of heads, O Chamunda, O slayer of Munda!

लक्ष्मि लज्जे महाविद्ये श्रद्धे पुष्टि स्वधे ध्रुवे ।
महारात्रि महामाये नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ १२ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who are good fortune, modesty, great wisdom, faith, nourishment and Svadha. O you who are immovable, O you, the great Night and the great Illusion.

मेधे सरस्वति वरे भूति बाभ्रवि तामसि ।
नियते त्वं प्रसीदेशे नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ १३ ॥

Salutation be to you, O Narayani, O you who are intelligence and Sarasvati, O best one, prosperity, consort of Vishnu, Dark one, Destiny, be propitious.

सर्वस्वरूपे सर्वेशे सर्वशक्तिसमन्विते ।
भयेभ्यस्त्राहि नो देवि दुर्गे देवि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ १४ ॥

O Queen of all, you who exist in the form of all, and possess every might, save us from error, O Devi, Salutation be to you, Devi Durga!

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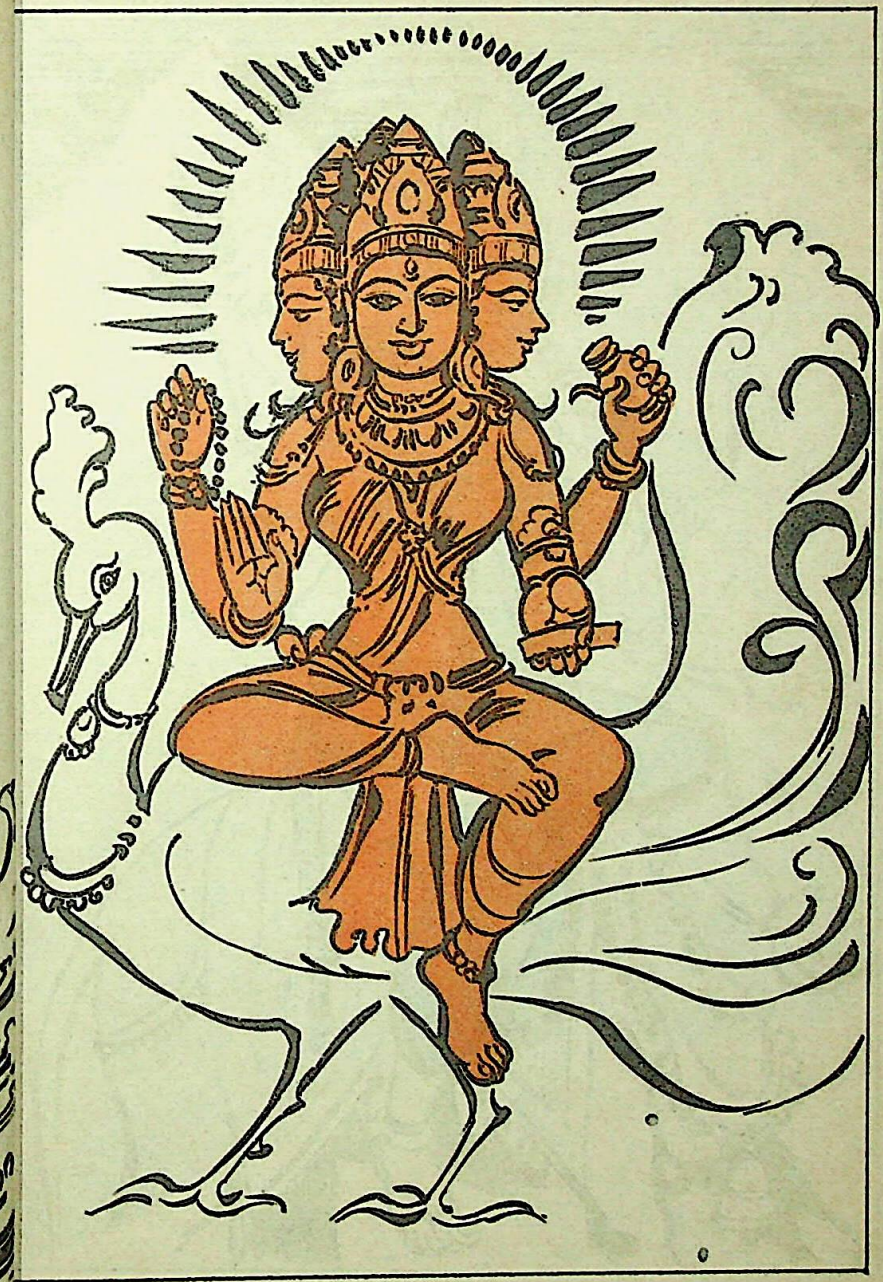

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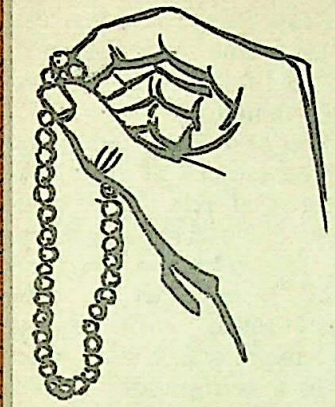

NAMA JAPA

Its Rationale

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA & CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD

PEOPLE who have never tried the practice of repeating the name of God are apt to scoff at it; it seems to them so empty, so mechanical. "Just repeating the same word over and over!" they exclaim scornfully. "What possible good can that do?"

The truth is that we are all inclined to flatter ourselves—despite our daily experience to the contrary—that we spend our time thinking logical, consecutive thoughts.

In fact, most of us do no such thing. Consecutive thought about any one problem occupies a very small proportion of our waking hours.

More usually, we are in a state of reverie—a mental fog of disconnected sense impressions, irrelevant memories, nonsensical scraps of sentences from books and newspapers, little darting fears and resentments, physical sensations of discomfort, excitement or ease.

If, at any given moment, we could take 20 human minds and inspect their workings, we should probably find one, or at most two, which were functioning rationally.

The remaining 18 or 19 minds would look more like this: "In-bottle. That time I saw Roosevelt. In love with the night mysterious. Reds veto Pact. Jimmy's trying to get my job. Mary says I'm fat. Big toe hurts. Soup good...." etc., etc.

Because we do nothing to control this reverie, it is largely conditioned by external circumstances. The

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weather is cloudy, so our mood is sad. The sun comes out; our mood brightens; Insects begin to buzz around us, and we turn irritable and nervous. Often, it is as simple as that.

But now, if we introduce into this reverie the repetition of the name of God, we shall find that we can control our moods, despite the interference of the outside world. We are always, anyhow, repeating words in our minds—the name of a friend or an enemy, the name of an anxiety, the name of a desired object—and each of these words is surrounded by its own mental climate. Try saying "war," or "money," ten-thousand times, and you will find that your whole mood has been changed and coloured by the associations connected with that word. Similarly, the name of God will change the climate of your mind. It cannot do otherwise.

In the Hindu scriptures we often find the phrase: "To take refuge in His name." (See also the *Book of Proverbs,* xviii, 10: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe.") This phrase—which at first may sound rather too poetical—comes to have a very real and literal significance in our spiritual life.

When the mind is so violently disturbed by pain or fear or the necessities of some physical emergency that it cannot possibly be used for meditation or even rational thought, there is still one th that you can always do; you repeat His name, over and o You can hold fast to that, thro out all the tumult.

Once you have really tested proved the power of the Word, you will rely upon it creasingly. Through cons practice, the repetition beco automatic. It no longer has to consciously willed. It is ra like the thermostat on a w heater or a refrigerator. Wh ever the mind reaches an und able "temperature" you will that the repetition begins of i and continues as long as necessary.

Mere repetition of God's n is, of course, insufficient—as Pa jali points out. We must meditate upon its meaning.

But the one process foll naturally upon the other. If persevere in our repitition, it lead us inevitably into meditat Gradually, our confused rev will give way to concentra thought. We cannot long conti to repeat any word without be ning to think about the rea which it represents. Unless we far advanced in spiritual practi this concentration will not be ma tained for more than a moments; the mind will slip i into reveries again. But it will a higher kind of reverie—a rev dominated by *sattva* rather th by *rajas* or *tamas*. And the Na perpetually uttered within it,

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be like a gentle plucking at our sleeve, demanding and finally recapturing our attention.

In India, when a disciple comes to his teacher for initiation, he is given what is called a *mantra*. The *mantra* consists of one or more holy names which the disciple is to repeat and meditate upon, throughout the rest of his life. It is regarded as very private and very sacred —the essence, as it were, of the teacher's instructions to that particular disciple, and the seed within which spiritual wisdom is passed down from one generation to another. You must never tell your *mantra* to any other human being.

The act of repeating it is called *japa*. You can make *japa* aloud if you are alone, or silently if you are among other people. It is convenient to do this with a rosary —thus linking thought with physical action (which is one of the greatest advantages of all rituals) and providing a small but sufficient outlet for the nervous energy of the body, which might otherwise accumulate and disturb the mind. Most spiritual aspirants resolve to make a certain fixed amount of *japa* every day. The rosary serves to measure this—one bead to each repetition of the *mantra*—so that you are not distracted by having to count.

Needless to add, the practice of making *japa* is not confined to the Hindu religion. The Catholics teach it also: "Hail Mary" is a *mantra*. A form of *mantra* is also recognised by the Greek Orthodox Church. We quote here from those two remarkable books, *The way of a Pilgrim*, and *The Pilgrim Continues His Way*, which record the spiritual pilgrimage of a Russian monk during the middle of the last century.

The continuous interior Prayer of Jesus is a constant uninterrupted calling upon the divine Name of Jesus with the lips, in the spirit, in the heart, while forming a mental picture of his constant presence, and imploring his grace, during every occupation, at all times, in all places, even during sleep. The appeal is couched in these terms. "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." One who accustoms himself to this appeal experiences as a result so deep

'Namasivaya' is the mystic invocation whereby man can appeal directly to the Infinite Reality, the One without beginning and end, to reveal Himself in forms and ways accessible, understandable and attainable by man.

The venerable Saint Appar in his canto on 'Namasivaya' recalls the potent spell of this word of God, to guide and guard him against all ills, and extols the name as the "unfailing, strengthening, sustaining support of man."

In the same convincing way, Manikkavachakar too sings in adoration of the Lord's Name 'Namasivaya,' as it unfolds to him the full purport of his consecration, from where there is no return, no looking back and regret. The unquenchable Love of God has made him, His Own, His very Own.

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"Sivapuranam" opens with the mystic symbol of 'Nama-Sivaya'—"Almighty Lord Siva, Adoration to Thee." This utterance suggests that the purpose of human life is to attain the Feet of the Lord. He who realises the significance of 'Namasivaya,' "Praise be to Thee, Siva!"—as the highest goal in life, ceases to be enamoured of his own significance, engrossed as he is with the magnitude of the Lord's everlasting infinity. Hence the incantation of the 'Word of God eternal,' marks the first step in the phase of the spiritual pilgrimage of the poet of 'precious utterance'—Saint Manikkavachakar. 'Namasivaya' is the mystic word of power, whereby he was initiated to address His Lord and Master in the "I and Thou" dialogic relationship.

a consolation and so great a need to offer the prayer always, that he can no longer live without it, and it will continue to voice itself within him of its own accord.

Many so-called enlightened people regard this frequent offering of one and the same prayer as useless and even trifling, calling it mechanical and a thoughtless occupation of simple people. But unfortunately they do not know the secret which is revealed as a result of this mechanical exercise, they do not know how this frequent service of the lips imperceptibly becomes a genuine appeal of the heart, sinks down into the inward life, becomes a delight, becomes, as it were, natural to soul, bringing it light and nour ment and leading it on to union God.

St. John Chrysostom, in his te ing about prayer, speaks as follo "No one should give the answer it is impossible for a man occu with worldly cares, and who is able to go to church, to always. Everywhere, wherever may find yourself, you can set up altar to God in your mind by m of prayer. And so it is fitting pray at your trade, on a jour standing at the counter or sittin your handicraft.... In such order of life all his actions, by power of the invocation of Name of God, would signalized by success, and finally would train himself to the unin rupted prayerful invocation of Name of Jesus Christ. He w come to know from experience frequency of prayer, this sole m of salvation, is a possibility for will of man, that it is possibl pray at all times, in all circumsta and in every place, and easil rise from frequent vocal praye prayer of the mind and from th prayer of the heart, which opens the Kingdom of God within us."

HOW TO KNOW GOD, The Aphorisms of Patanjali, trans with a new commentary by Sw Prabhavananda and Christop Isherwood, pp. 222, Price Rs. Sri Ramakrishna Math, 11, Ra krishna Math Road, Madras-600

Big things are only little things put together. It is encouragi to think of this when confronted by a big task. Remember alwa that it is only a group of little tasks, any one of which you m easily do. It is ignorance of this fact that makes some men afra to try.

—W. P. Ward

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True Holiday-Making

MAHATMA GANDHIJI

A correspondent invites me to warn those who care against turning during the forthcoming Divali holidays good money into fireworks, bad sweets and unhygienic illuminations. I heartily respond. If I had my way I should have people to do house-cleaning and heart cleaning and provide innocent and instructive amusements for children during these days. Fireworks, I know, are the delight of children, but they are so because we the elders have habituated them to fireworks. I have not known the untutored African children wanting or appreciating fireworks. They have dances instead. What can be better or healthier for children than sports and picnics to which they will take not bazar-made sweets of doubtful value but fresh and dried fruit? Children, both rich and poor, may also be trained to do house-cleaning and whitewashing themselves. It will be something if they are coaxed to recognize the dignity of labour if only during holidays to begin with. But the point I wish to emphasize is that at least a part, if not the whole, of the money saved by doing away with fireworks etc. should be given to the cause of Khadi, or if that is anathema, then to any other cause in which the poorest are served. There cannot be greater joy to men and women, young and old, than that they think of and associate the poorest of the land with them in their holidays.

Young India, 25.10.1928 (The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. 37—Page 394).

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In vibrant, resonant, poetic prose, Prof. G. Kumara Pillai renders into English "Siva Thandavam", an inspired composition in Malayalam by Mahakavi G. Sankara Kurup, the first Jnanapith awardee.—Ed.

The Dance of SIVA

G. SANKARA KURUP

I

A SUDDEN splendour strikes my eyes; and I stand dazzled as the dusk explodes into the sublime vision of the cosmic dance of Lord Shiva.

The entire sky is his whirling hair and the stars are the scattered beads from the broken chain around his neck.

Trembling in tune with his rapture, the crescent moon worn on his hair slips and shifts and swings by the side of his head.

The shadowy dusk still stained with the blood-red sunset glow is the wild elephant's fresh hide that hangs loose swirling around his mighty loins.

And as he dances in his ecstasy, the holy ashes of the moonlight are strewn unceasingly over my bewitched soul.

Beyond the frontiers of stellar space, in the invisible heart of distant nebulae, new solar systems might be opening their eyes in sheer wonder and joy to see the mighty dance of Shiva.

Stripped of its earthiness, stripped of its gaudiness, my soul in its utter nakedness plunges headlong into this sweet flood-tide of nectar.

The wonder of my soul blossoms in the evening flowers, the joy of my being throbs in the murmuring breeze.

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A sudden splendour strikes my eyes; and I stand dazzled the dusk explodes into the sublime vision of the terrible bea of the cosmic dance.

With the smouldering past in one eye, the burning pres in another and the glimmering future in the third, weaving cr tion, preservation and destruction into a matchless pattern, ble ing pity, valour and love into a superb harmony, the three-e Lord treads the cosmic stage.

As he sways his eight out-stretched hands in the supr dance of life, the eight directions of space open out like a mir at his finger-tips.

And his dance is attuned to the music of the five elemen the primal music that vibrates with ever-free rhythms and ev new melodies.

Every movement in it, howsoever slight, is a flash of me ing, not a turn tends to mar the many-splendoured motif.

What a unique idiom of self-expression! The insepar duality, half-male and half-female, bound for ever in the joy creation, symbol of wholeness and perfection as he dances eternal dance at once tender and terrible, earthy and ether as aeons break into fragments like anklets in the dance, wha unique idiom of self-revelation!

Treading on the proud forehead of death, laughing w thunderous reverberation, the universal soul performs his da of life and death.

The cosmos swells with wonder, the oceans ebb and fl and the crust of the earth erupts into peaks at the magic to of his moving feet.

The vibration of his finger-tips as they beat time becom the pulse of consciousness, low or loud, subtle or sonorous the whole range of things, animate and inanimate.

O, that my ears had opened to that primal rhythm in eve thing and everywhere and myself had merged in its all-perva ing rise and fall!

The song of my life would then have sprung from it a sublime melody; death would have crept into my presence listen to that song, aeons would have accompanied me on harp; my song would then be the song that composed the m of life in their infinite variety into the basic primal harmony

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A sudden splendour strikes my eyes; and I stand dazzled as the dusk explodes into the sublime vision of the cosmic dance of the blue-red Lord.

Her hair falling on his broad chest, her head bent towards his shoulder, the fragrance of her breath exciting every fibre of his being, his ecstatic partner is by his side and the Lord turns his glowing face to kiss her blushing cheeks.

And the vision of the primordial couple opens out infinite beauties on the petals of my soul.

The beat of the drum in his hands bodies forth languages; its inherent rhythm and melody give wings to lifeless words; even my poor language soars on mighty wings beyond the edge of meaning.

Little torches of reason are lit from the eternal fire of his sacred eyes. And on the long path of being and becoming, we know right from wrong in their divine light. Presumptuous man, cursed with a little knowledge, arrogates the sources of that light to himself and denies him.

O you, who nip the head of untruth and make of it a begging bowl, you, mendicant of love, when you came and knocked at my heart, I unleashed my barking ego at you.

You just laughed, you, who can turn the whole earth into an empty skull.

Man's ego grows apace, it grows into monsters of caste, of religion, of state and they fight with one another.

'This is mine,' 'this is mine' we claim and scramble for things that belong to none but you.

Blood flows, arson flames and pitiless death stalks the earth nosing for prey. Even unborn generations in the womb of time are threatened by the lifted paws of death.

You just laugh, you, who can turn the earth into an empty skull.

Strike, O Lord, strike down the demon of ego that advances with menacing defiance and dance, O Lord, vanquisher of death, dance on his fallen head. Let your act of creation begin in the sacrament of destruction.

A sudden splendour strikes my eyes, that I stand dazzled as the dusk explodes into the sublime vision of the cosmic dance of Lord Sadashiva.

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Health Culture

1. Eat moderately. Take light and simple food. Offer it to God before you eat. Have a balanced diet.

2. Avoid chillies, garlic, onions etc, as far as possible. Give up tea and coffee, smoking, meat and wine entirely. Never take drugs.

3. Fast once in 15 days or take milk, fruits, only.

4. Practise Yogic Asans or physical exercises for 15 to 30 minutes. Take a long walk or play some vigorous game daily.

Energy Culture

5. Observe silence (mauna) for two hours daily and four to eight hours on Sundays.

6. Observe celibacy according to your age and circumstances. Restrict sex indulgence to once a month. Decrease it gradually to once a year. Finally take a vow of total abstinence f balance of life.

Ethical Culture

7. Speak the TRUTH. Spe little, speak kindly, speak sweet

8. Do not injure anyone thought, word or deed. Be kin to all.

9. Be sincere, straightforwa and open-hearted in your tal and dealings.

10. Be honest. Earn by th sweat of your brow. Do not a cept money, things or favours u less earned lawfully. Develo nobility and integrity.

11. Control fits of anger b serenity, patience, love. merc and tolerance. Forget and fo give. Adapt yourself to men an events. Avoid bad company.

Will Culture

12. Live without sugar for week or month. Give up su on Sundays.

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13. Give up cards, novels, cinemas and clubs. Fly from evil company. Avoid discussions with materialists. Do not mix with persons who have no faith in God or who criticise your spiritual life.

14. Curtail your wants. Reduce your possessions. Have plain living and high thinking.

Heart Culture

15. Doing good for others is the highest religion. Do some selfless service for a few hours every week without egoism or expectation of reward. Do your worldly duties in the same spirit. Work is worship. Dedicate it to God.

16. Give two to 10 per cent of your income to charity every month. Share what you have with others. Let the world be your family. Remove selfishness.

17. Be humble and prostrate to all beings mentally. Feel the Divine Presence everywhere. Give up vanity, pride and hypocrisy.

18. Have unwavering faith in God, Scriptures and your Guru. Make a total self-surrender to God and pray: "Thy will be done; I want nothing". Submit to the Divine Will in all events and happenings with equanimity.

19. See God in all beings and love them as your own self. Do not hate anyone.

20. Remember God at all times—at least on rising from bed, during a pause in work and before going to bed. Keep a rosary in your pocket.

Psychic Culture

21. Study one chapter or 10 to 25 verses of Gita with meaning daily.

22. Memorise the whole of New Testament, etc., gradually. Keep it always in your pocket.

23. Read religious books daily or on holidays. Study your scriptures regularly.

24. Attend religious meetings and Satsang of saints at every opportunity. Organise such functions on Sundays or holidays. Form a study circle or prayer group.

25. Visit a place of worship at least once a week.

26. Spend holidays and leave periods when possible in the company of saints or practise Sadhana at holy places in seclusion. Spiritualise your holidays.

Spiritual Culture

27. Go to bed early. Get up an hour before sunrise. Answer calls of nature, clean your mouth and take a bath. Sit for spiritual exercises.

28. Recite some prayers. Practise Pranayama, Japa and meditation from 5 to 6 o'clock. Sit in meditation Asan throughout, without movement, by gradual practice.

29. Perform your daily Japa and worship, if any.

30. Write your favourite Mantra or name of God in a notebook for 10 to 30 minutes.

31. Sing names of God (Kirtan) prayers, praises and hymns for half to one hour every night, with family and friends.

32. Make annual resolves on above lines. Regularity, tenacity and fixity are essential. Record Sadhana in a spiritual diary daily. Review it every month and correct your failures.

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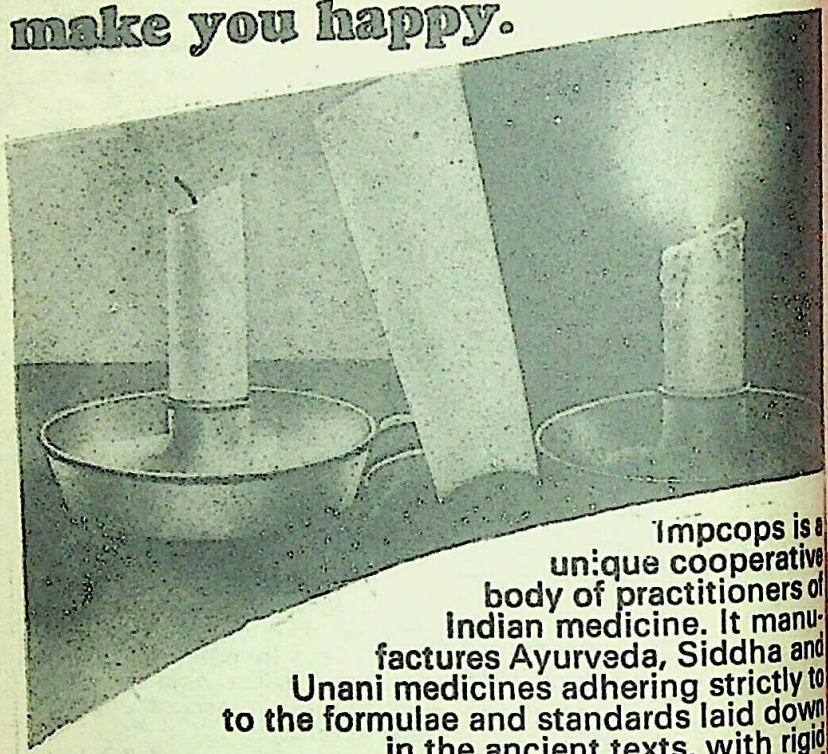

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The Illustrious Trio

Swami Chinmayananda, Swami Chidananda and Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi have, this year, completed the age of 60.

On April 14, 1916 was born Swami Chinmayananda, on September 24, Swami Chidananda and on October 11, Smt. Subbulakshmi.

While physical ageing is inevitable, there is something that is ageless about their lives—that something shared by all those who liberate themselves from the cocoon of the love of self to bask in the sunshine of the love of God.

These modern minstrels of God have, each in one's own way, helped spread the message of devotion to God.

Diwali is the festival of lights and on this occasion we pay our tribute to this illustrious trio who have brought light and delight to the hearts of many.—*Ed.*

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Swami Chidananda

the Crest Jewel of the Divine Life Society

Prof. INDRAJIT SHARMA

SWAMI CHIDANANDA is the present President of the Divine Life Society, which was founded by the late Swami Sivananda Maharaj in 1936. He joined Sivanandashram in 1946 in the prime of his youth at the age of 26.

Swami Sivananda as an expert of human psychology at once spotted the genius of Swami Chidananda and gave him various tasks and responsibilities which he discharged to his satisfaction.

He did not get initiation into Sannyasa immediately. He waited for full six years to qualify himself for the privilege of donning the ochre robes of a Sannyasi. It was on July 10, 1949—Guru Purnima day—that Swami Sivananda gave him Sannyasa Diksha. He had been the General Secretary of the Divine Life Society from 1948 till the Mahasamadhi of Swami Sivananda in August 1963. He was elected President of the Divine Life Society unanimously by the Board of Trustees in August 1963.

I have had the privilege of knowing Swami Chidananda since 1948 when I first visited Sivanandashram. Since then my love and admiration for Swami Chidananda has only been on the increase. Swami Sivananda was proud of Swami Chidananda. He used to quote Swami Chidananda in his speeches during his All-India and Ceylon tour in 1950 as an exemplar of Divine Life.

Once Swami Sivananda referred to Swami Chidananda in these

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words: "He is the Koh-i-noor of my mission, the torch-bearer of my mission. The prince among Sannyasis, who else could he be other than Swami Chidanandaji? He is the divine aroma of my mission, the rhythm of my work. The blissful Chidanandaji infuses bliss in everyone who comes into contact with him."

Swami Chidananda captivates the hearts of all by his unassuming manners and charming simplicity. He dislikes pomp and show. Simple living and high thinking is the motto of his life. He takes keen interest in the rehabilitation and welfare of lepers, and the government has appreciated his services by associating him with the Leper Welfare Association of the Di

It is on record that onc treated a leper suffering from ing wounds and restored hi normal health by his constan tention and divine love. On treated an injured dog w wounds were emitting a str smell and achieved the satisfa of healing it completely. Sw possesses the healing touc have had occasions to witnes healing miracles performed him without any fanfare of p city. The utter simplicity o life is borne out by the fac he forbade his devotees and mirers from offering him any presents and garlands on the picious occasion of his Di

Swami Chidananda garlanding the Vice-President Shri B. D. Jatti

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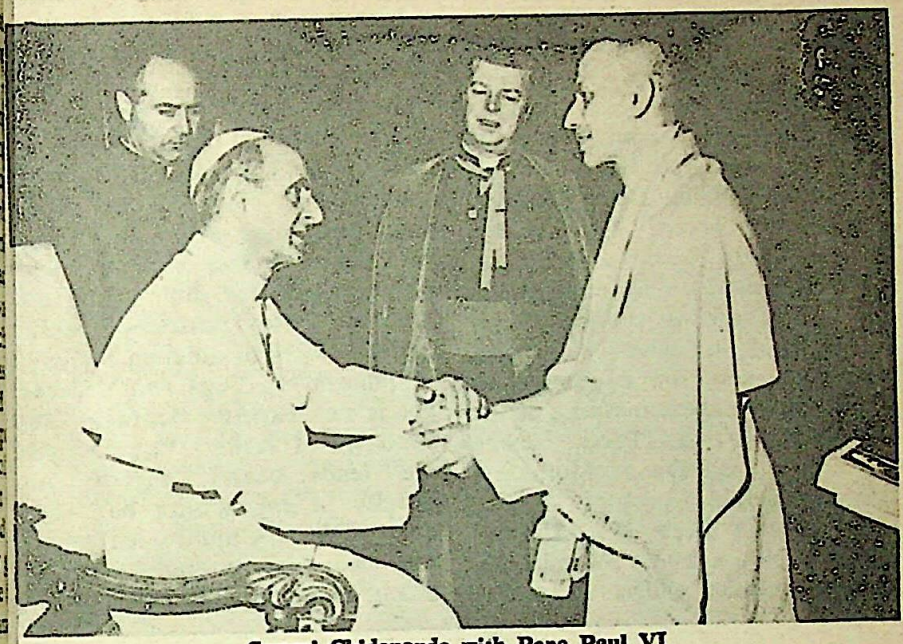

Swami Chidananda with Pope Paul VI

Jubilee Celebration marking the completion of 60 years of age on September 24, 1976.

Swami Chidananda is a blissful soul. He radiates peace, harmony and bliss all around. In this world torn by malice and strife, it is very rare to come across blissful souls like him. He is an enlightened soul, capable of keeping huge audiences spell-bound by the magic-wand of his silvery oratory. Words seem to be coming out from the depth of his soul, and as such they strike a sympathetic chord in the listeners' hearts.

His capacity to undertake arduous frequent tours even at the cost of his health to different parts of the country and the world is something phenomenal. After the Mahasamadhi of Swami Sivananda in August 1963, he had been virtually on the move, touring different parts of India and the world. He visited the United States of America and many European and African countries a number of times for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge. He gave discourses in various universities, colleges, churches and public halls in the West. He is a practical Yogi and follows the traditional methods of Yoga and meditation. He does not confound the masses with various complicated theories of Yoga and meditation. Like his Guru, he lays great stress on the ethical development of human

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personality for achieving the inner purity of heart.

Swami Chidananda is a linguist who can speak and write in different Indian languages. He has got perfect command over the English language. His diction is lucid and sublime. He has written a number of books. His *magnum opus* is *Yoga Lectures* published by the Divine Life Society in 1960. *God as Mother* is another illuminating book in which he gave a beautiful exposition of the significance and esoteric meaning of the Navratra Durga Pooja (Nine Nights of the Divine Mother in Her threefold aspect of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati). He also wrote a biography of Swami Sivananda entitled *Light Fountain* under his pen-name 'Pi which was first published in This biography is still regarde a masterpiece. It is a delig experience to go through hi spiring and soul-stirring book

Swamiji is in constant de everywhere. People pine to the bewitching smile playing his childlike face and are eager to hear his illuminating courses. He possesses p understanding of different bran of philosophy, Yoga and Ved He is an expert practitioner exponent of various *Yogic K* He lends charm, dignity novelty to any subject he d upon. He is a multi-sided ge He can direct a drama with much ease and perfection a

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can a meditation class. He can speak with a small child with an infantile vivacity and can also discuss knotty problems of philosophy and religion with the Pope in Rome.

If religion means an absolute identity of one's self with the 'self of all, Swami Chidananda fulfils this condition. If religion means selfless service of the downtrodden, the poor, the sick and the lepers, Chidanandaji comes up to the mark. If religion means universal love for all living creatures on earth, then he passes that test also in excellent grading.

Swami Chidananda cuts across the narrow confines of caste, creed, colour and country and takes the whole humanity in his cosmic embrace. He makes no distinction between the high and the low, the rich and the poor. He would meet and greet everybody on an equal footing. He is a much-sought-after saint for inaugurating various spiritual conferences in the country. He puts his frail frame to maximum of toil and strain. He can undergo intense suffering for the uplift of mankind.

To look at Swami Chidanandaji is to behold an emblem of gentleness, a symbol of human goodness, an embodiment of humanity and a paragon of all divine qualities. My only prayer to God Almighty is to spare this rare gem on the crown of the Motherland for many, many years to come. □□□

HEARTY DEEPAVALI GREETINGS

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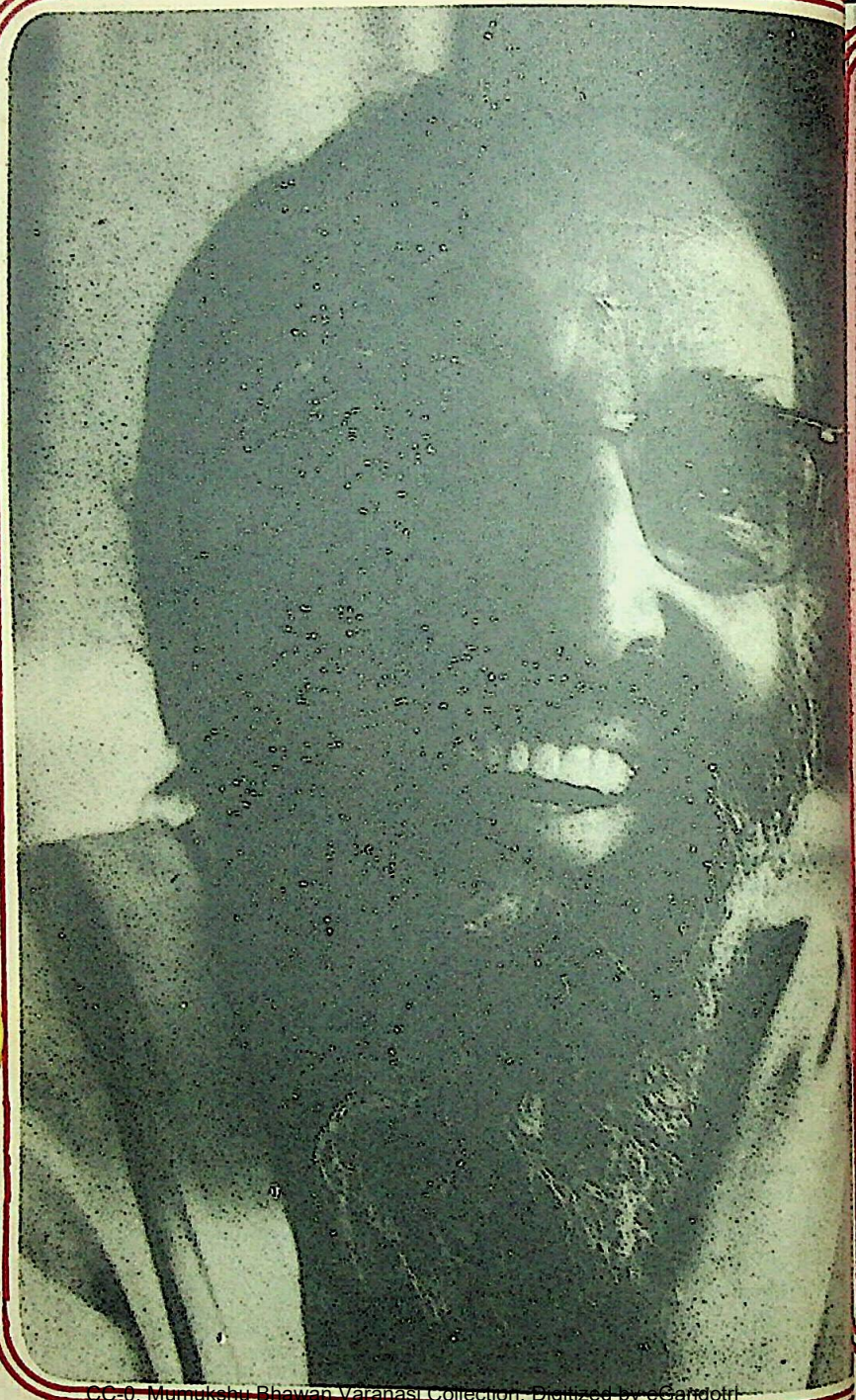

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Swami Chinmayananda

a Messiah of – Universal Brotherhood

MAJOR R. G. SALVI

IT was the month of August of the year 1966. My wife and I were driving in the evening, past the Oval maidan in Bombay. The normally placid and drowsy maidan was that day throbbing with activity. It was impossible not to be aware of the teaming crowds, the rhythm of Bhajans. the posters announcing *Gita Gyana Yagna* and a Sadhu in ochre sitting on the stage. A perfectly human curiosity made me slow down the car and glance inquisitively around. But at that stage in life, misinformed as I was, I had a strange allergy to the word 'religion.' Not that I was a non-believer, but Sadhus and their discourses somehow did not appeal to me. So I muttered to my wife, "Some sadhu talking on religion. Come on, let's go home." And we nonchalantly bypassed Swami Chinmayananda's discourse on the *Gita* that year.

November, 1967. It was one year since that solitary instance when I had even been near a *Gita* discourse by Swamiji. My wife said to me one evening that she wanted to attend some lecture by one Swami Chinmayananda, and asked me if I would drop her to the Lloyd Ground, Bombay, where it was to be held. I agreed readily. I had to go that side anyway, to attend an office meeting. She said that I need not pick her up, as she would return home with some friends. However, Fate intended otherwise. My meeting was postponed and I decided to go back to the Lloyd

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Ground and wait for my wife to come out. I reached the Llyod Ground, parked the car, and stood at the gate and waited. Once again, it was impossible not to be aware of the vast assembly of people gathered there. But this time, more fascinating than the number of people was the magnetic voice of the Swami and the dynamic content of his talk. Within seconds, I was inside the *pandal* and sitting on the ground, listening as attentively to the discourse as any other person there. But that was just the beginning. I knew that there would be more to come.

Soon the discourse was over for the day, and my wife and I returned home. I can even today remember the complete silence in the car as we drove back home. Was it Swamiji's dynamic personality that had overawed us, or was it a mute bowing down to the magnitude of the Truth that he had partly revealed to us? I do not know. All I do know is that I had totally forgotten myself, and was in a completely different and new state of mind.

At the dinner table that night, the entire family came together: my four children (the youngest being but 12 years old) and my two nephews who were staying with us then. One of them was a young, 30-year-old professor in a college in Bombay. My wife related to all of them the content of the evening's discourse, and she begged them to come and attend it the next evening just for her sake. I could see from all their faces that they all received this request of hers very skeptically. Religion to them, too, (just as it had to me) brought to mind something not very appealing or worth looking forward to and *Srimad Bhagvad Gita* to them was a Sanskrit song for the old! However, just to please her, they all agreed.

So the next evening saw us all driving once again to the Lloyd Ground. We all took our seats close up in front. My wife had warned the children that even if they got bored, they would simply have to put up with it for that one day, as Swamiji had requested everyone not to get up and leave in the middle of the lecture, for it disturbed the rest of the audience. That was the sanctity and discipline he always followed. But she might as well not have bothered to warn them, for as the discourse progressed, I could see that each one of them was as fascinated as I had been on the previous day, and all of them were listening with rapt attention. They too had been totally ensnared! From the next day onwards till the end of the Yagna, it was these children who were dressed and ready to leave the house to go to the *Yagnasala*, even before my wife and I were.

So that was how we first came to hear Swamiji. Since then we

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have all continued our humble association with the Chinmaya Mission. Two of my children have since been married. But marriage has not diverted them from the spiritual path and activities of the mission. On the contrary, they have brought two additional members, not only to my family, but into the fold of the Chinmaya family.

As I said earlier, there is something powerfully magnetic about Swami Chinmayanandji, that attracts towards him anyone who comes in contact with him. He has that subtle knack in him, to arouse people from their slumber of ignorance and awaken them to search for the divine Truth. Listening to him, one becomes conscious of one's own inner weaknesses and feels the urge to overcome them.

But perhaps the most impressive thing about Swamiji is his unique way of interpreting the *Bhagvad Gita* and Upanishads. He takes this high and subtle philosophy and with the use of day-to-day, pedestrian examples, and with his engrossing style of speech, makes this teaching of our scriptures accessible to all and comprehensible to even the youngest child in the audience. His remarkable knack putting the core of the ancient wisdom into a modern outer covering is the very thing that has drawn such a large variety of disciples to him. Indeed his followers come from all walks of

Major Salvi and Smt. Hansa Salvi

life, all religions, all castes and all ages. It is the very universality of the philosophy that he brings down to one's very doorstep that attracts people to him like the proverbial moths to a flame. He has taken as the motto of the Chinmaya Mission: "To give maximum happiness to the maximum number for the maximum time."

It is in keeping with the same motto, that Swamiji decided upon his scheme of imparting this knowledge contained in our holy scriptures to three generations, simultaneously. Thus came into existence, the study classes for the adults, the "yuva kendras" for the youth (16 to 25-year-olds) and the "Balvihars" for children. At all these three groups religious texts, epics and mythological stories are studied, discussed and assimilated, in the manner most suited to that particular age group. Everything that Swamiji does has that typical Chinmaya stamp on it. He has understood, like no

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one else, the need of the day and his various schemes provide not only for the present society, but for the following generations as well. With the intention to disseminate the treasure of spiritual knowledge that our ancient sages have left for us, Swamiji has established the Sandeepany Sadhanalaya in Bombay. It is necessary that the subtle mysteries of our *Sastras* are brought right up to the masses. It is with this in mind that the Brahmacharis who are dedicated workers are trained at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya. The students, on completion of their course, spread out into the remotest corners of our country and abroad (some of the students are foreigners) and broadcast this knowledge among the people in their respective languages. These students are thoroughly trained in the Vedantic texts. Three such batches are already in the field doing their work, and the fourth batch is being trained. And in addition to all this, of course, are Swamiji's own regular discourses for the public on *Bhagvad Gita* and other scriptures. Swamiji has written lucid commentaries in English on Upanishads, the *Gita* and other Vedantic texts to bring home their wisdom to millions in India and abroad.

Swamiji's discourses are a stimulant to the modern, educated mind, and they help bring about some sanity in one's daily life, one's relationships with the world around and purification, if not perfection, of the inner self. His ever-smiling face is an index of the rediscovery of the eternal happiness within. Swamiji also has a deep insight into the minds of the young intellectuals who have an attitude of revolt towards religion as it means today. In no time Swamiji captures the hearts of thousands of such youngsters by always saying to them, "Don't accept what this bearded Swami tells you. Religion is not mere superstition to be followed blindly, but an exact science of self-perfection. Think, think for yourselves, analyse and come to a conclusion."

And then he goes on to expound the great Vedantic and spiritual

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truths, proving to them every statement therein, in the rational and logical manner which appeals to them. It is indeed a sight to watch these youngsters sitting with him, eagerly absorbing every word of his. Who then can call our youth indisciplined and irreligious? Swamiji has been able to transform these youngsters because he caters to them in the language they speak and understand. Is it not strange then, that initially, when Swamiji began teaching he was criticised for uttering the *Shastras* in a foreign language and that too when he was a Kshatriya? "Mahapapam"! But nothing deterred Swamiji. He carried on with immense zest and enthusiasm like a royal Kshatriya prince and has today spread the message of the holy books, far and wide.

The charm of Swamiji's discourses lies in that, due to the simplicity of language and the familiarity of examples he gives, he puts this philosophy within easy reach of everyone. Swamiji is not singing anything new. He sings the same old words of our sacred ancient sages, but he puts them to modern tune, so that the people of today can understand and appreciate it. Religion to him is a way of life and he points out the direction that we should follow, explaining convincingly why this path will give the maximum happiness.

Swami Chinmayananda is indeed a mastermind. He has been

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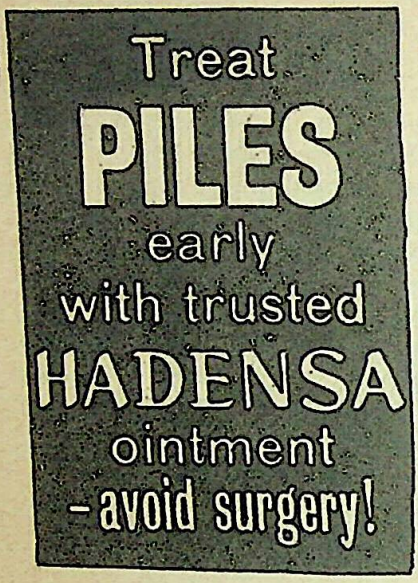

for the past 25 years satisfying an urgent national need—the need for improving the spiritual and moral values of a society, which is far more important than the mere material improvement if you wish to strengthen the character of the nation. The pledge which he has made for his devotees to live up to, only affirms his aims. It runs:

We stand as one family
bound to each others with love and respect.
We serve as an army,
courageous and disciplined,
ever ready to fight
against all low tendencies and false values
within and without us.
We live honestly
the noble life of sacrifice and service
producing more than what we consume
and giving more than what we take.
We seek the Lord's grace
to keep us on the path of virtue, courage and wisdom.
May Thy grace and blessings flow through us
to the world around us.
We believe that the service of our country
is the service of the Lord of Lords.
and devotion to the people
is the devotion to the Supreme Self.
We know our responsibilities;
give us the ability and courage to fulfil them.

To come in contact with such a Messiah of universal brotherhood is indeed a great blessing. Anyone who gets an opportunity to be near Swamiji and to imbibe in himself Swamiji's teachings even once, could be considered fortunate. I was indeed lucky to have had the privilege of his divine company many times during the last decade. My meetings with him have given me a new lease of life full of promise. But then, attempting to write about such a reverential personality, is like a small flickering flame trying to guage the brilliance of the sun!

Swamiji stepped down from the Himalayas 25 years ago. His subtle ears heard the soft whisper

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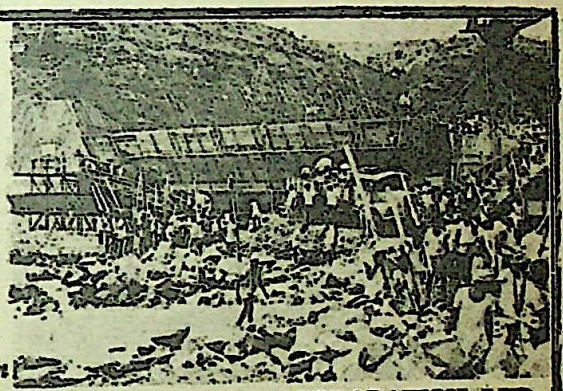
from mother Ganga, "Come along with me, my son, and be like me. Fulfilment of any possession is in sharing it with others." He drew inspiration from the sacred river and came down into the world to spread the knowledge and glory of our ancient culture. And now this *Jnanadhara*, the stream of knowledge can never stop. It will be there as long as the Ganges flows on the plains of Bharat.

Even his recent delicate health has not stopped this gush of service to humanity. In spite of the doctor's advice not to exert, not a day passes without a talk, a lecture or a discourse. He says, "I must earn my day's meal." His activities and undertakings bring to one's mind the memory of Adi Sankaracharya—a *Sannyasi* at heart, a *Karmayogi* in action and a devoted *Bhakta* of the all-pervading Almighty.

I prostrate humbly at the sacred feet of our most revered Gurudev.

□ □ □



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Singer, poet and mystic, Shri Dilip Kumar Roy composed this poem as a spontaneous tribute to the Queen of Music, Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi, who became 60 on October 11. For "M. S.," who has been singing since the age of ten, music has been a sadhana. How many hearts have not been lifted up by her voice and how many institutions enriched!—Ed.

M. S. Subbulakshmi

DILIP KUMAR ROY

All who love bliss must hail you, sister mine,
As a flawless nectar-shower of delight
Ineffable. For can one ever define
Why the soul to beauty yearns its troth to plight?

You, pilgrim of sky, will live in the memory
Of all who have thrilled to the flute-call serene
Of your angel voice which heals with its harmony
The demon-wounds of hate and strife and din.

Warbling, you slip through life's grim dungeon-bars
Upleading us to an experience of the stars.

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The problem of the "modern man" is one of neutralising t aspect of his sensitive mind which makes him react in terms regret, failure, disappointment, despair, sorrow and ultima frustration, says Swami Dayananda Saraswati of Chinmaya M sion who had recently been on a tour of the West.—Ed.

THE WORLD I SAW

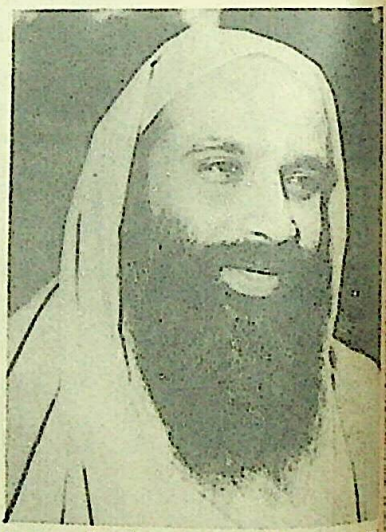
My impressions

SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI

ONE has to pay the price for what one achieves. Industrially advanced and economically affluent societies like the American do pay for what they have. This is what I see in the lives of people everywhere.

A man of no culture and education will become sad only when he has to face a great calamity in his life. An educated, cultured, well-informed person does not need more than a frown of a person or Nature to make him sad. This is because the latter is more sensitive than the other.

A gross person has no great choice between two colours, much less between two shades of the same colour. For him anything bright in colour is fine. He hardly distinguishes the difference between shades, for he is not sen tive to them. The "modern m —informed as he is throu school, Press, T.V. and trave has a high degree of sensitivity



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like one shade of a colour and dislike another shade of the same colour, just a shade different. I find the problem of the modern man is his sensitivity.

It is meaningless to give up this degree of sensitivity which is indeed a blessing, the prerogative of a poet. It makes a man eloquent as he should be. It is not possible for him to give up an inner maturity either, except through drugs or mental disorders. Therefore the problem boils down to neutralising that aspect of his sensitive mind which makes him react in terms of regret, failure, disappointment, despair, sorrow, and, ultimately, frustration.

This fact is true not only of the Americans and the Canadians whom I saw recently, but of all individuals who have a degree of sensitivity without the means of neutralising its menacing aspect. To add to the problem of reaction to situations, an average American has a fair grasp of psychology with all its terms! Therefore he not only reacts, but also names his reaction with a psychological term! And to the term he reacts further! In that condition if he goes to anyone who says: "I have a solution to your problem of mind" it is but natural.

I found in my recent tour, people clinging to Gurus who more often promise them peace through some strange techniques. Some of these people are Indian, some others from other Eastern countries while a good few of them are from among themselves. Some of them give even a modern look to their techniques by using scientific terms and instruments!

While America, the Land of Uncle Sam, is really bright and beautiful and the people are really searching to find a means to have a mind they can love, the ugly part I saw is only these meaningless Groups and their Heads.

What they require is not just a technique but a change in attitudes towards the world and their lives lived therein. This means a thorough understanding of the life as a whole which is exactly the subject matter of Vedanta. It is this understanding that will bring about right attitudes towards themselves and the world they come to confront in day-to-day life.

Sensitive as they are, they can appreciate the teaching of Vedanta if it is presented in a form they can easily follow. I have had no difficulty in communication as I unfolded for them the message of the *Gita* and the Upanishads.

Since they don't have this vision of life as a whole which involves a true appreciation of themselves and their relationship with the world and God, they are apt to go in for anything which helps them escape from themselves.

If the informed modern man is not with a group trying a technique, he is busy all through the week just to have a week-end. I

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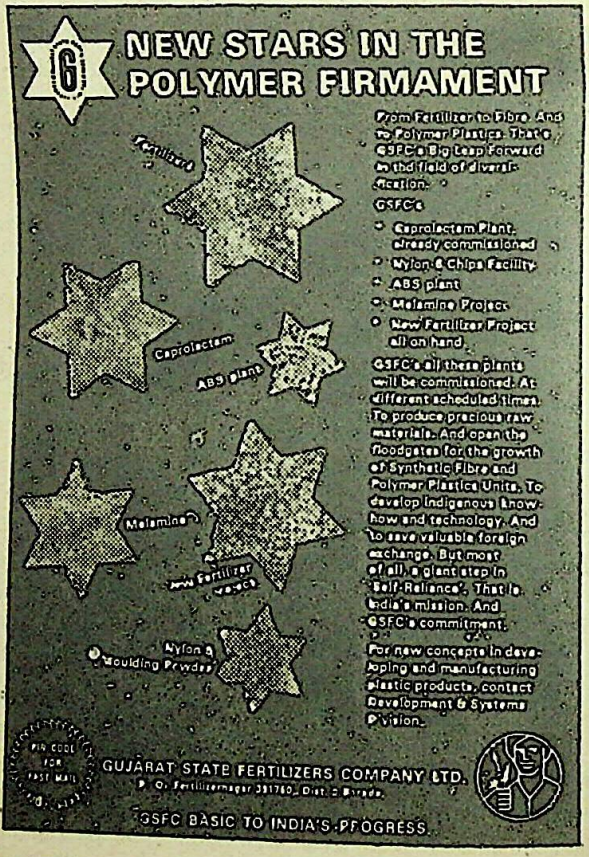
think it is no more true that the average American works during the week and enjoys a week-end. On the other hand he works five days of the week to have a week-end! The whole Society and its economic activity seem to be centered on recreation.

Unless he gets an inner strength, call it spiritual or what you will, the informed modern man has to find escape from himself. If he does not turn mad in the process, it is because the human heart always hopeful. □ □

Truth is One: sages call it by various names. There is one God, one absolute Truth, and one Existence. People of different countries worship the one God under various names and in different forms. Each of these names and forms is a face of the Infinite, and is one with the Infinite.

Srimad Bhagavat



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In this illuminating article the Vice-President of India who is also the President of the Basava Samiti deals with the different facets of reforms Basaveswara introduced in Karnataka in the 12th century A.D., which are relevant even today and serve as guidelines in uplifting the downtrodden, in improving the status of women and in establishing dignity of labour, thereby serving the cause of universal brotherhood.—Ed.

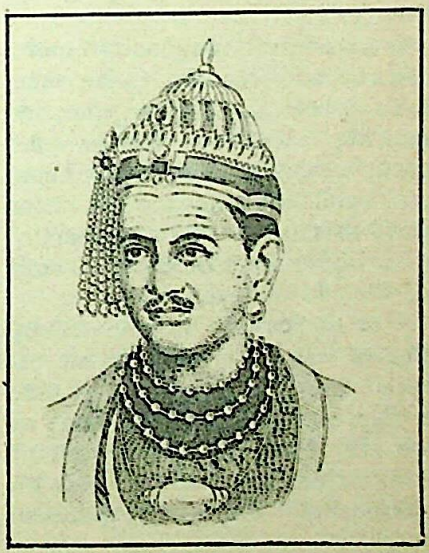
BASAVESWARA

The Great Social Reformer

B. D. JATTI

SAINT Basaveswara, the great religious teacher of the 12th century, was a resolute and independent thinker as also a man of consistent conduct and candid character—a rare instance of powerful intellect.

He was also a mystic, a statesman, a religious reformer, a literary figure and above all an eminent socialist. By the middle of the 12th century, he sponsored a movement called Lingayatism or Veerashaivism, which wrought many changes in the cultural life of India. The movement was not a revivalistic but a revolutionary one, since it did not revive the cult of rites and rituals.



It introduced a new method of worshipping God in the form of Ishtalinga. It gave freedom of

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thought and action and free scope for discussion in religious matters. It taught not merely dignity of manual labour, but it inculcated into men the spirit of doing any menial work as worship. Thus it gave a great fillip to the development of arts and crafts of the land. It liberated the community from the shackles of groundless fears and irrational superstitions, such as would manifest in the observation of omens and religious pollutions.

It did away with caste distinctions and priestcraft and tried to uplift and educate the untouchables. It gave sanctity to the family relations and raised the status of women. It produced a literature of considerable value and enricned the Kannada language of the country.

It made the community more humane and at the same time more prone to hold together by mutual toleration. It brought about a synthesis of head, heart and hand. It tended in all these ways to raise the nation generally to a higher level of capacity both of thought and action.

The movement inaugurated by Basava was not a sect with stereotyped ideas, but in course of time it happened to be so. So long as we view Basava in the context of Lingayatism as a sect, we miss his personality and his profound teaching.

Though he was born in the Kannada country he belonged to the whole of mankind, for heart relented for the poor downtrodden.

He taught us one of the principles of democracy by say that the roots of the social life embedded not in the cream society but in the scum of soc It was his witty saying that cow does not give milk to who sits on its back but to who squats at its feet. With wide sympathy he admitted and low alike into his fold. remarkable admission carrie influence far and wide and s the stagnant waters of the It rendered the religion al bracing in its sympathy, c in its outlook, a perennial fou of delight and inspiration.

Precursor of New Style Vachan

He taught in simple lang that every individual can wor his own salvation by dedic himself to the Lord, that matters of faith the invidious tinctions of caste and colour absolutely no place, and that mediation of a priest with all paraphernalia of rites and ri has no meaning and efficacy, the eye of the soul turns fr from darkness to light.

In order that his gospel appeal to all alike and may widely diffused, he adopted K nada, the native tongue, as medium of his instruction. Ba himself was a precursor of a style in Kannada literature.

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labours of Basava and his colleagues led to the development of Vachana which is unique in the cultural history of Karnataka.

As a result of this, the national intellect was freed from the thraldom of scholastic learning. The language of the common people attained the dignity of a classical tongue, because many a Vachanakara poured out his full heart in profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Superstition, Caste System and Idolatry

Basava saw the appalling ignorance and superstition of the masses and traced their root-cause to caste system and idolatry. He did not favour idolatry but advocated strict monotheism, the worship of one and only one God. Caste has been perhaps the great obstacle to social, economic and political progress of India. It has stood in the way of the solidarity of Hindu people and prevented the growth of a compact nation. The caste system is defended on the ground of division of labour, and division of labour is a necessary feature of every civilised society. Basava raised the cry of revolt against caste, not because it is a division of labour, but because it is division of labourers into water-tight compartments. It is a hierarchy in which the division of labourers is graded one above the other. This division of labourers is not spontaneous; it is not based on natural aptitudes, but it is founded on the social status of parents.

Hence the stratification of occupations and industries. But Industry is not static, it undergoes changes; with such changes an individual may be free to change his occupation. Basava advocates not hereditary profession but pleads for the free choice of occupations. Says he, "a man becomes a blacksmith by heating iron, he becomes a washerman by washing clothes, he becomes a goldsmith by tinkling gold, he becomes a Brahmin by reading the Vedas." Is there caste predestined? he asks. Caste is not based on the dogma of predestination but is based on free choice.

Anubhava Mantapa

One of the monumental works that Basava did was the establishment of an institution named Anubhava Mantapa. It was a spiritual as well as a social academy presided over by Allamaprabhu, a great spiritual personage.

That this rare but monumental institution in the cultural history of India was founded by Basava about 1160 A.D. is corroborated by the sayings of his contemporaries.

Anubhava Mantapa is, therefore, not a fancy but a fact that stands pre-eminent in the history of Lingayatism. It was a nucleus round which gathered persons of all shades, of all professions and of all ranks, ranging from the prince to the peasant, to take part

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in the deliberations of religious, social, economic and spiritual matters.

It is gratifying to learn that amongst the assemblage of these persons numbering about 300 there were nearly 60 women mystics, of whom Akka-Mahadevi was the beacon-light. To this institution we owe that flood of religious literature in Kannada known as Vachana literature, unique in the history of Indian culture.

From it emerged the Shatsthala philosophy, the most remarkable and unique feature of the faith. Basava founded this institution mainly to make man realise his place in the scheme of the universe, to breathe a new spirit in the then decaying religion, to give women an equality of status and an independent outlook, to abolish caste distinction, to encourage occupations and manual labour and above all to countenance simplicity of living and singleness of purpose.

The institution would bear eloquent testimony to the genius of Basava, whose field of action was as varied as it was vast. It reveals not only his practical wisdom but also the happy blending in him of head, heart and hand. Scholars opine that this institution reminds us of the parliament of religions of Janaka, of the early councils of Ashoka, of the later parliament of religions of Akbar.

Three things emerge from work of Basava—non-viole non-exploitation and non-acc tance of gifts. These were three cardinal tenets of the soc structure as adumbrated by Bas Basava says non-violence is creed. Peace is the outcome non-violence, as war is product of hatred. Peace a is coming to the forefr in the world politics. To pu the policy of peaceful co-existe between states, irrespective of t social systems has been the supreme desire of the major tions. Non-violence has its ba the spiritual nature of man. less the art of politics is bro into touch with spiritual life experience, it will remain ba and fruitless.

Basava attempted to bring p tics into touch with spiritual in his concept of the welfare or Kalyana Rajya. The yana Rajya was a soc bespeaking the normal expres of the human being to en sympathy and co-operation, no man can hope to live alone be prosperous. Social interco is now possible even without bl relationship. Basava's society anticipatory of this ideal.

One is apt to overlook the able contributions of Basava economics of socialism. Ba taught the dignity of ma labour by giving it a relig

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significance. Every kind of manual labour that was run down by the so-called high-caste persons was looked upon with love and reverence, since it was done in the spirit of service both to God and man.

Thus arts and crafts flourished and a new foundation was laid in the history of economics of the land. Basava was the first mediaeval prophet to preach that *poverty is not a spiritual sin but it is a social evil.* It is not a legacy bequeathed to us through sin committed either by us or by our forefathers. It is rather an outcome of social conditions, and being urged by this motive he strove hard to set right the economic conditions of the then defunct society.

He collected all people belonging to different vocations and laid the foundation of a Brotherhood of labour, the members of which were required to follow these rules:—

1. Each member should earn his bread with the sweat of his brow.
2. Each member should take to some work suited to his temperament.
3. Each member should earn only as much money as his needs require. (He condemned beggary, even if it is religious, as curse to life.)

Forms of Exploitation

Exploitation in one form or other has been the fate of social life. Great thinkers and reformers were at pains to eradicate it from society. When was it that we came to exploit each other? The day when the strong did say: 'This is mine and that is yours.'

Basava was a strict adherent of non-exploitation and tried to bring it into practice in social structure. He was convinced that exploitation dominates all the four spheres of life—economic, political, social and religious.

In the economic sphere he saw exploitation between the labourers and the capitalists; he also saw that capital was static, and labour dynamic. As he lived in pre-machine days he had not to face the evils of machinery. He was a partisan of labour and enunciated that labour should be the sole source of value. In the sphere of politics, exploitation works under the garb of the ruler and the ruled.

In the sphere of social life it is expressed in the ill-treatment of the lower class by the higher, and is manifested as social superiority. And in the religious life, says Basava, exploitation masquerades itself as Guru and Shishya. the relation of which is illustrated by the philosopher's stone and iron. The illustration of iron and philosopher's stone, however hoary it may be, speaks of the inferiority and superiority complex. He, therefore, upheld the illustration of a light kindling another light, the second of which is in no way less than the first. For Basava, Socialism was a Religion of trust.

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So, to be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved. The spirit that keeps up society is mutual trust. Alas! man does not trust man but tempts him, and this temptation is the source of exploitation. Hence the advice: 'Better shun the bait than struggle in the snare: for man gains the strength of the temptations he resists.'

Brotherhood of Labour and Non-Acceptance of Gifts

Acceptance of gifts has been a feature of civilised society. The covetousness for Dakshina or gifts from the Vedic times down to the present day is traditional in the history of Indian religion. Later on, the Upanishads tried to combat this spirit by saying that true Dakshina consists of penance, charity, rectitude and veracity. Of course, this heralds a great change as regards the attitude of man towards the material things of the world. But this change could not hold its sway for a long time, and even if it exerted its influence it was personal. Basava stood for the non-acceptance of gifts and his Brotherhood of Labour lived up to this tenet literally. Basava was critical of the acceptance of material gifts, as it would lower one's self-reliance and the spirit of independence. He would like to draw a distinction between the gifts of man and the grace of God; he frowns on the former but pines after the latter. For 'gifts are as the gold which adorns the temple grace is like the temple that sanctifies the gold.'

Thunderous Revolt of Basava

At the time of Basava slavery did not exist in its naked form, but it persisted in a modified form. The thunderous movement of revolt of Basava against the caste system, priest-craft, corrupt idolatry, meaningless ritual and rank materialism enlivened the masses.

The Indian labourer and the Indian untouchable were at the lowest rung of the ladder of civilisation in the world; and they could not show any effective sign of rising above their station, merely because they had not had any tradition of revolt. They had become slaves mentally and morally to the caste system, and they had not known that aspect of humanism which was taught by Buddha and practised by Asoka.

Basava breathed new life into the dead bones of religion and infused new spirit and love into the poorest and the lost. The greatest evil which the caste system brought into India was this, that it degraded manual labour and made it too mean and base and vulgar a thing for a high-caste-born man to practise.

The consciousness of the dignity of labour which Basava brought home to men by his sayings and his personal example was not long in breaking down this contempt for labour.

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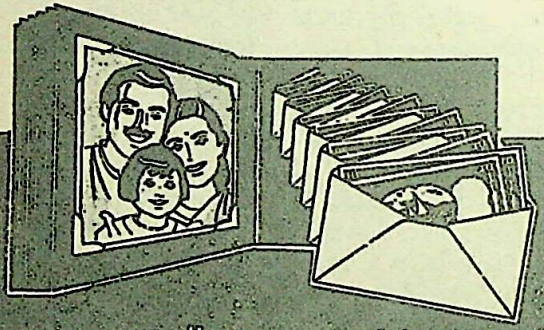

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Basava sought to proclaim the love of God to rich and poor alike. He blessed with his tender compassion the outcaste and the despised. Whether we read his strong denunciations of the rich who live luxurious lives, his hatred of greed and selfishness, his indignation at the religious hypocrisy or whether we read of his tenderness towards the suffering poor, his gentle care for and protection of the untouchables, or his forgiving compassion for the erring, the outlook is always the same. What he aims at, all the while, is the healing of the mind of the wounded humanity by a vast, inexhaustible inflow of divine love. His inward method was clear for all time and none could mistake it. It was only the service of love that could finally prevail.

A Common Sharing in Love

Permanent improvement in human conditions of labour is only possible where this inner spirit of love is realised and understood. Without this inner spirit, all labour movements are little else than the building up of houses on the sand of the sea-shore to be washed away by each incoming tide.

In order to translate into action this spirit of love and service, Basava attempted to build a brotherhood of labour which sprang from the very heart of the inner life. It was purely voluntary and intuitive, a free and willing service. Voluntary, as indeed it was, we can see that the conditions which went to make the perfect fulfilment of the life of such a brotherhood of labour at first possible, could not be lasting in the world as it then existed. Only after a long discipline, of which we cannot even now see the end, could a strength of inner character become so widespread as to make such spiritual labour in its full unselfishness practical, normal and natural. Nevertheless, the attempt did not altogether perish without bearing fruit.

In the Anubhava Mantapa founded by Basava the labourer and the lord, man and woman, rich and poor, the high and the low, differing in race, colour, sex, and position sat side by side together at a common table shared together in love.

This surely was no slight victory in a divided and caste-ridden world. In the midst of all the selfishness and worldly greed of later ages, this voluntary Communism of Basava became a continual source of inspiration to earnest-minded souls, who could not be satisfied with things as they were.

Purification Within and Without

Basava was not merely satisfied with the inward method of purification, but he put into practice the outward method of curing the economic ills of the country and

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of improving the conditions of labour.

Basava had formed people's committees representing various vocations such as agriculture, horticulture, tailoring, weaving, dyeing, carpentry, etc. All vocations were regarded as of equal value and the members belonged to all sorts of vocations.

There were members of the fair sex such as Satyakka, Remmavve, Somavve with their respective vocations. The curious thing is that all these and many others have sung the Vachanas or sayings regarding their vocations in a very suggestive imagery.

The word "service" is a synonym with the most important word 'Kayaka' used in Kannada Vachanas. To Basava the Kayaka itself is liberation. Kaya means body and Kayaka means work done by the body. But this word has a wider sense as prescribed by Basava and his followers. It also means an occupation, a profession, a vocation, labour, work, duty or any other employment undertaken which finally leads one to self-realisation.

This is a new outlook towards man and his labour or service. Everyone must work and earn. This is opposed to renunciation and beggary, and also to the caste system. Difference due to one's work does not make him higher or lower in the caste, and all are equal before God. This is the basic meaning of "Kayakave Kailasa" i.e. work or service is the basic way to Kailasa (liberation).

□ □ □

There is no physician like cheerful thought for dissipating the ills of the body; there is no comforter to compare with goodwill for dispersing the shadows of grief and sorrow. To think well of all, to be cheerful with all, to patiently learn to find the good in all—such unselfish thoughts are the very portals of heaven; and to dwell day by day in thoughts of peace towards every creature will bring abounding peace to their possessor.

—*James Allen*

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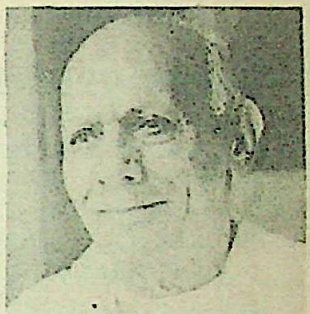
My faith has taught me reverence towards all other faiths, even as my reverence for my mother teaches me equal reverence for every mother.



My Credo

SWAMI ANAND

IT is one of the cardinal teachings both of Hinduism and Buddhism that every one will reach the Truth ultimately and that no one can remain in error for ever. Hence no one shall be condemned eternally or suffer everlastingly.

This, to my mind, has been the core of Hindu faith and belief, which was restated and propagated by Sahajananda, Dayananda and other reformers in modern times, the latest among them being Sri Ramakrishna s teachings of unity and synthesis of all religions. This was further reinforced by Gandhi with equal emphasis. He worked all his life on that basis for understanding and unity among various human families called nations constituting mankind, crowning his efforts with his own martyrdom.

This, in my view, was the last word in Hindu reformation. And although it also suffered jerks and jolts and a few setbacks during subsequent centuries and gathered some fresh excrescence inevitable with the passage of time, it also put forth during the past hundred years, a host of new saints and reformers such as Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharshi, Tapovanji, Radhasoami, Mangat Rama, or gospellers and interpreters such as Dayananda, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Tagore, Tilak, Gandhi, Rajagopalachari, Radhakrishnan, Mashruwala and others, who succeeded not only in removing such excrescence but even in widening the boundaries of the Hindu view

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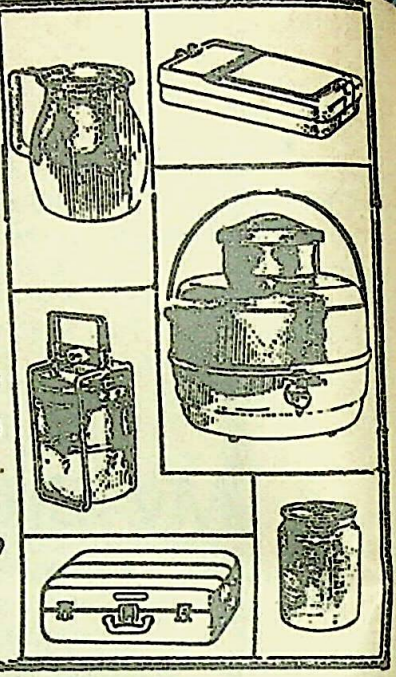

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of life without violating its soul or spirit. The faith thus harmonized and re-oriented may be said to present the modern image of living Hinduism.

I may be allowed to digress and offer a glimpse of my credo, the positive aspect to what may hitherto have seemed to be such of a negative discussion.

I am a Hindu by birth and belief. I have grown up in that faith. This faith has taught me reverence towards all other faiths, even as my reverence for my mother teaches me equal reverence for every mother. Thus I respect all faiths as I do my own.

I believe all Truth is one; its manifestations may vary. It lends itself to myriads of expressions or representations without harm to itself and may often reflect the colour of its container. Nothing can affect it basically or essentially.

I believe in loving and helping my neighbour as myself, for to the Hindu he is none else than his own self, a spark of the Divine or the Universal Soul, call it God or by any other name. Thus as a Hindu I must engage myself continually in serving others selflessly even by denying myself what I could enjoy as my own.

As a seeker of Truth and of higher life, I must also exert myself continually for purifying myself of all that is base and ignoble and to make myself a worthy instrument or vehicle in the functioning of the Divine will.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Essentially a Ramakrishnaite Sadhu of Gandhian persuasion, Swami Anand came in contact with Lokmanya Tilak in early life. One of the earliest associates of Gandhiji, he was closely connected with his weekly journal, Young India (English) and Navajivan (Gujarati) as also with his political, social and constructive campaigns.

Jailed several times, Swami Anand worked as a close colleague of Sardar Patel during No-Tax Campaign of Bardoli peasants in 1928 and led a team of Ashram workers during Bihar earthquake in 1934, for relief work among the distressed. He was also Joint Secretary, All India Anti-Untouchability Sub-Committee of the Indian National Congress and was among the founders of Kasturba National Memorial Trust. For a time he conducted the Gandhi Ashram, Thana, near Bombay, and worked among Adivasis. He worked among the Frontier refugees near Hardwar and Dehra Dun after partition.

The Swami was a great lover of Himalayas, a noted hiker, author and linguist.

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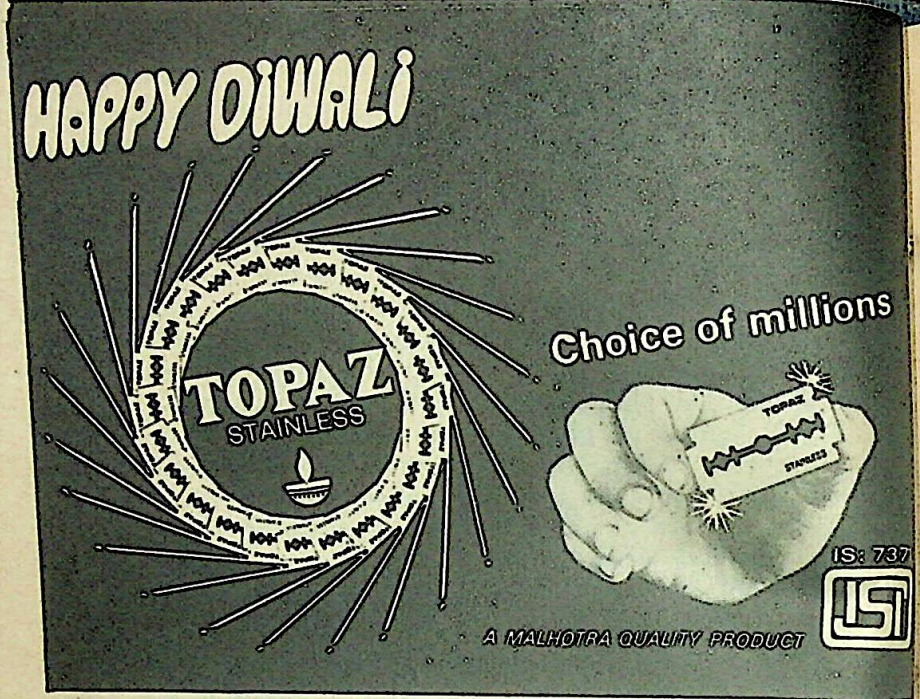

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Dogmas and rituals apart, the Hindu thus has equal reverence for all faiths and religions. As such I am willing and happy to sit at the feet of the prophets and holy men of all races, religions or climes, and to learn from them. Indeed, I should love to regard myself or call myself part Christian, part Buddhist, Muslim, zoroastrian, Jain or Jewish and regard it as my good luck to be striving to be worthy of all the best in them all. This I can do, I claim, without the least harm to my Hinduism. I rather feel my Hinduism will bloom and blossom forth and add to its stature and lustre, for my doing so. I would feel myself exalted.

The Hindu does not believe in any final revelation, and hence in a chosen race, or in any incarnation or prophet of God as holding special credentials for reclaiming sinners and lost souls, or for interceding on their behalf before God in order to redeem them. He reveres and believes in prophets and their teachings. He believes in their capacity to help or reclaim struggling mortals through their abounding love for all, and to win them over to the path of righteousness. Thus, I revere the Jewish, the Christian, the Muslim prophets, and saints of all other races and faiths, as I do those of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Sikh faiths, and reap spiritual benefit from one and all of them without demur. However, like most Hindus, I do not believe in, or understand, proselytism.

All this tends to impress me profoundly. It confirms me in my belief and faith in the basic identity of the human race and impels me to accept it as a single joint family. And if, as a believing Hindu, I aspire to seek an escape from the cycle of birth and death, dedication to its service should be my means and my salvation.

Such is my image of catholic Hinduism. And barring a very small minority of intellectuals, it is subscribed to, and followed in faith, however inadequately, by most Hindus in their daily life. It is popularly known as 'The Path of Saints.' To this, I have come to subscribe myself after a lifetime of earnest quest and experiment. It has been my credo and my sheet-anchor for years now.

And in spite of varying vicissitudes of daily life, I cling to it with all the faith and passion of my soul in the firm belief that it has enabled me to make my peace with my Maker and brought me a measure of solace which I hope will stand me in good stead during my last moments, when after my final salutations to God, I hope to bid my goodbye to friends in the words of Tukaram:

आम्हीं जातो आमुच्या गांवा ।
आमुचा राम राम घ्यावा ।।

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LIVING in Burma were Buddhists, Moslems, Christians, Hindus, and animists. U Nu did not interest himself with Buddhism only. Since he found great peace of mind from the influence of Buddhism, he felt that other religionists should also be able to find solace from their respective religions.

The help that he gave to the Buddhists, he also extended to the others; for example:

In regard to religious grants, the total amount once having been determined, they were distributed proportionately among the various denominations on a population basis.

U Nu brought sacred relics of the Buddha from India, and of his

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Howsoever men approach me, even so do I accept them, for on all sides whatever path they may choose is mine.

Bhagavad Gita

SARVA DHARMA SAMABHAVA

RT. HON. U NU,
FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF BURMA

saints from Ceylon, and exhibited them in Burma for public worship. After a visit with Pope Pius XII at the Vatican, U Nu brought back for the Catholics of Burma holy pictures, religious books, and medallions of the Pope. On his return from Israel U Nu brought crucifixes and water from the Jordan for the Christians.

A Roman Catholic mission was sent to Rome at government expense, to pay their respects to the Pope. Similarly, a Moslem organisation was set up and a mission sent to Mecca at government expense.

Just as the Tripitaka had been translated from the Pali into Burmese, so also a fund was set up for translating the Koran from Arabic to Burmese. Moslem leaders also received a promise of government assistance to convene a council of religious scholars to revise the new text.

Since a Christian Bible had existed in Burmese from the time of Dr. Adoniram Judson, there was no need for a translation. At a Protestant convention in Rangoon, the Prime Minister presented each delegate with a copy of the Bible.

Insofar as religious functions were concerned, the Prime Minister never refused invitations, whether they were from Moslems, Christians, or Hindus. He went to mosques, churches, and temples. He attended conferences and made speeches or sent messages on request.

When religious instruction on Buddhism was introduced in State schools, the Prime Minister did not forget to make provisions for the teaching of Islam and Christianity. This produced the repercussions described below:

A Clash with Buddhist Monks

In 1954 three representatives of a most prestigeous organisation of Buddhist monks called on the Prime Minister.

"*Dagagyi*,[1] we've come to object to Islam and Christianity being taught in State schools. We want this stopped immediately."

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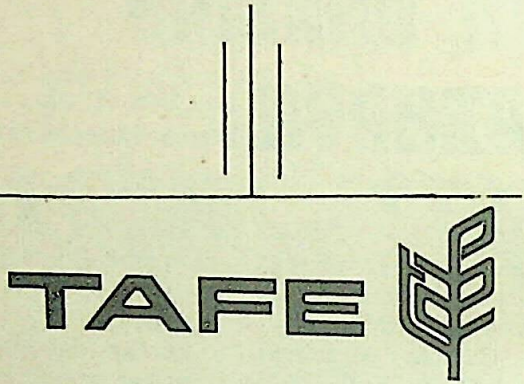

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"Monks, why do you dislike those subjects?"

"Because they are heresies."

"Only Moslems study Islam, and Christians Christianity. Buddhist students do not study them."

"Don't have them taught in State schools. If they want to study these subjects, let them go elsewhere."

"Please refrain from injustice. King Mindon was a great patron of the Buddhist religion. During his reign he gave considerable aid to the Christian and Moslem faiths in his capital, Mandalay."

"We were not there in Mindon's reign. Had we been present we would have prevented such aid."

"State schools are run not only with money provided by the Buddhists, but with taxes paid also by Moslems and Christians. If therefore Buddhism is to be taught in these schools, equal opportunity must be given to Islam and Christianity."

"We most strongly object. These subjects shall not be taught."

The Prime Minister lost his temper: "You may go now," he told the monks, "if Islam and Christianity are not to be taught in State schools, no other religious subjects will be taught either."

□ □ □

1. Literally, dagagyi means "donor" or "benefactor" of the Buddhist faith. It is customary for monks to address others and to be addressed in the third person.

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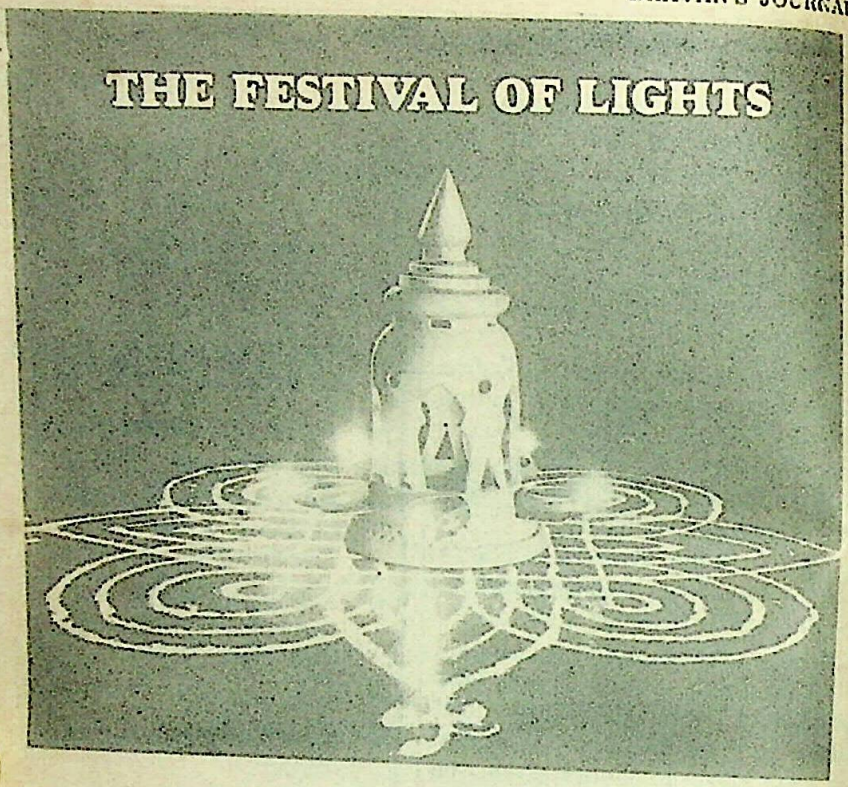

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The Story of The Virtuous Butcher

T. R. RAJAGOPALA IYER

IF Greece can boast of having produced two epics great mainly for their literary beauty, India can justly boast of having produced two epics, great not only for their literary beauty. but more for their bearing upon life and conduct, a thing undreamt of or only dimly and fitfully visualized by Homer.

India can be said literally to lie in these two epics, and these two epics can be said to constitute India. But what a measure of difference between these two Indian epics, each forming, as it were, a complement to the other!

Valmiki's is the sustained, musical, unitary, almost lyrical genius, singing the qualities of Rama, the man so perfect, that his qualities pass into the Divine, and the glories of Rama Rajya, the kingdom on earth that is to be transmuted into the Kingdom of God.

More representative of the bewildering complexity and subtlety of the Indian genius, with its high-strung pre-occupation with questions partly casuistical and partly practical,

Type of the Indian wise who soar but never stray,
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Earth

is Vyasa.

His *Mahabharata* has a two-fold appeal. It was a book written at a time of the great convulsion of war, when an old order changed yielding place to new, when the Dwapara Yuga gave place to the Kali age, the golden to the iron. Its individual appeal in offering solutions to the problems that confront Nara Arjuna i.e., every one of us, from day to day, is even more pronounced.

Vyasa gathered up in himself all the learning and wisdom of the

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past and laid down the direction in which the world should spin the ringing grooves of change in future. Probably the greatest benefactor not only to India, but to the world, seems to be Vyasa. His is a name known throughout the world for his *Gita*.

By the sheer value and power of the great epic he seems assured of an ever increasing popularity in the world.

The widening appeal of the *Gita* has, naturally, provoked opposition and criticism, mainly from vested interests who went to the extent of suggesting that it (*Gita*) seems to be a later interpolation.

Apart from the many irrefragable reasons exposing the absurdity and untenability of the suggestion of these critics, the strongest is this: if one should compare the epic of the *Mahabharata* to anything in the world it is only to the vast and sublime range of the Himalayan mountains; everywhere we feel and see the sweep of the elemental forces gathering themselves up and issuing with effortless ease in imposing peaks, loftier than the loftiest peaks of the world, so much so that when the Mount Everest of the *Gita* is reached no one is surprised but he almost expects it, for all along the play of forces throws up many a Kanchen Junga, many a Dhavalagiri, many a Mount Kailas.

The *Gita* is not the lone outcome of a single-speech Hamilton; it is the peerless consummation of at least a dozen other *Gitas*, and it has overshadowed them. One among such remarkable *Upagitas, if* we may so term them, is the *Dharma Vyadha-Upakhyanam* occurring in the Vana Parva (Cantos 208 to 219 of the *Mahabharata*) or the story of the virtuous butcher which illuminates many of the portions of the *Gita*.

Some of the slokas written in this earlier portion are lifted and incorporated in the later *Gita*, and it anticipates and reinforces in the guise of a striking tale the central teaching of the *song divine* of Krishna. It suggests and raises such a large number of moral and casuistical problems as would have delighted the heart of Socrates himself. One can affirm that the Upakhyana falls short of the *Gita* and the *Gita* alone in its high value.

II

The Brahmacharin meets the Brahmani

During their exile in the forest, the five Pandava princes came across the sage Markandeya, who had overcome the decree of Fate which had prescribed that his mortal span of life should be only 16 years on this earth.

Yudhishthira, the eldest of the Pandavas, who was from his birth interested in questions relating to right conduct puts questions to the wise sage. One of them was about the value of the service to their husbands by chaste women and of parents by their children.

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Markandeya narrated the following story by way of reply and illustration.

Once there lived a Brahmacharin or Brahmin student whose whole round of duties lay in a study of the Vedas or Hindu scriptures and serving his aged parents.

He conceived suddenly, however, that this was a lower level of life and that he should reach a higher one by retiring to the forest, and devoting himself exclusively, to a more intense study of the Vedas and penance. So he abandoned his parents and repaired to the woods.

He sat under a big banyan tree chanting the hymns and engaging himself in Yogic practices. Birds used to rest on this tree and one day droppings of a stork fell on his head. He was so overwhelmed by anger at what he deemed a wanton pollution that he looked fiercely at the offending bird which dropped down dead.

Extreme gratification at the attainment of supernatural Yogic powers succeeded the initial surprise of the student.

Almost immediately the Brahmin started on his daily round of begging for his food as enjoined by the Sastras.

He came to the house of a Brahmin lady who welcomed him and asked him to wait while she fetched the food. Meanwhile her husband entered the house tired and hungry and his loving and dutiful wife busied herself in welcoming him and refreshing him with a bath and food.

These services concluded, she recollected that she had asked the student to wait, and she hastened with the food. Fretting and fuming the Brahmin had been an impatient witness of her services to her husband.

"You have made me wait for quite a long time" reproved the Brahmin. "If you had no wish to give me food, you should have sent me away at once."

"I beg your pardon, most holy Sir", pleaded the lady. "My lord is my God. He came tired and hungry and I had to serve him first."

"A queer inversion this of the order of things! You make your lord your god and relegate holy Brahmins to a secondary place. You are proud and affected in your learning. You have not heard the rules of right conduct from proper teachers," said the Brahmin, looking at her sternly.

"Do you take me for a stork? Do not roll your eyes and try to frighten me. I have learnt from my parents and elders what duties I owe to Brahmins and what to my husband. Chastity is enjoined on all married women and I am a Sati and a Pativrata, chaste in thought, word and deed, not only by injunction but gladly and willingly. I worship the gods, too, but my husband is my first and foremost god. I know your life-story and how you burnt up the stork.

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But what you did does not become a Brahmin nor one aspiring to a higher life," said the lady unperturbed.

The Brahmin stood dumb-founded and quailed instinctively before the higher Yogic powers exhibited by the Brahmani He bowed to her and asked: "Pray tell me who is a true Brahmin."

Smilingly the lady replied: "Him the very gods count as a Brahmin who always speaks the truth, who serves and pleases his elders, who though hurt or ill-treated by others never retaliates, who has conquered his sense, who is fixed in virtue, who is pure and devoted to a study of the scriptures. Him the gods count as a Brahmin especially who has got his passions and anger entirely under control."

"Prithee, tell me what should be my course of conduct, wise lady," asked the Brahmin.

"The eternal laws of conduct are subtle and difficult. You have not understood your duties aright but have strayed away from them. A better teacher than I for you is a butcher who dwells at Mithila," said the lady.

Surprise upon surprise—a woman ignorant by birth as he deemed her, to be his first teacher, and now a butcher to complete the teaching! The pride of the Brahmin toppled over, but he was an earnest seeker after truth and so bowing to the lady he set out straight for the city of Mithila.

III

What Befell at Mithila

All along the way the Brahmachari came across members of the four castes, each intent on performing his duties—students, sages, and scholars—and his eyes got cleared and his mind broadened.

He found a great crowd and a concourse of men going to and returning from Mithila in quest of spiritual lore. For the fair city of Mithila was also the capital of Janaka, the disciple of Sage Yajnavalkya, who had pursued truth, with such single-minded devotion that the sage had taught him the secret of Brahman and the king had attained God-vision as a result thereof.

Such was the intellectual and spiritual ferment in the city that Pingala, a street walker, had felt the vanity of her life and turned towards God. And there was a saying current that the very stones of Mithila preached the truths of the Vedanta. If on the direction of the Brahmani and current report, Mithila

Did appear so fair to fond imagination,
It did rival by light of day her delicate creation.

The student felt the air throb and quiver with the birth of a revelation.

It did not take the Brahmin long to ascertain the butcher's shop, and lo! he found him buying and selling meat, higgling and bar-

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gaining; and this sight repelled him. As the student stood apart revolving many thoughts in his mind, the butcher saw him and hailed him:

"Welcome, holy Brahmin, who art sent by the pure and virtuous lady. Please wait while I finish my sales." And this was the second marvel at which the student wondered.

A short while after, the butcher took him to his house and offered him the rites of hospitality. But the Brahmin could not hide his feelings. He blurted out, "It is a pity that you are engaged in a cruel profession, unbecoming of you."

Said the butcher: "Censure not my vocation, holy Brahmin. I am but following my hereditary profession, which God has laid out for me. Lo now, King Janaka though a released soul, performs his duties unfailingly, just like any other ignorant man. For what, do you think? For the maintenance and uplift of the world, and to set an example for all men to follow. I but follow his lead. It is the mind which is the cause of sin, not the act itself. It is possible for a man to be engaged in a seemingly cruel profession like mine, yet not be affected by its sin. *Sishtachara* or right conduct should be the aim of life and men who practise it are rare on earth. They should be sought after like the *sanjivini*, the life-giving herb, and the rules of right and wrong learnt from them."

Asked the Brahmin: "What are the signs by which men of right conduct can be recognised?"

The butcher replied: "The righteous perform right things for the sake of right, in scorn of consequence. The secret of the Vedas lies in Truth, that of Truth in self-control, that of self-control in renunciation. Non-violence or non-inflicting of injury on others is the Supreme Dharma. Right conduct or virtue is nothing else than purity in body, speech and mind."

Sneered the Brahmin: "You state that the essence of Dharma or virtue lies in Ahimsa or non-violence. But you persist in performing the cruel acts concomitant to a butcher. I am not able to reconcile them."

The butcher smiled and said: "Listen carefully while I expound the secrets of Dharma, for its ways are subtle. As a result of past actions each man is born in a certain caste with his heredity, surroundings and profession formed for him by Fate or God, whatever you may call it. Fate really kills all animals, and we who appear to kill them are but mechanical instruments. All the world over animals had been sacrificed to the gods and the scriptures declare that the meat which is first offered to the gods, and distributed to the needy and hungry, and the remains of which alone are eaten, is equal to *Amrita* or nectar, and he who eats them should

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be deemed not to be a meat-eater. I am born a butcher. He who abandons his hereditary work commits a sin, and he who performs it correctly is fixed in virtue. Man cannot jump out of his heredity or hereditary profession. Shall I now put you a question?"

"Do" said the Brahmin.

"Tell me" asked the butcher, "is there any profession in which there is no harm or killing? Tell me is there any man or other being who has not hurt or destroyed other beings?"

The Brahmin felt he was getting into deep waters but he said valiantly: "Why not? Is there not agriculture? Are there not persons in all the castes who not only refrain from killing but from meat-eating?"

"People are under a wrong impression about non-killing in agricultural operation" replied the butcher. "I would say the greatest number of beings is harmed and destroyed only in that seemingly harmless occupation. The plough kills more than the sword. Can you contradict this?

"The vegetable kingdom is full of life. Do you know the wholesale destruction of it by man and beast, worm and bird, daily? What do you say to it?

"The water is full of animalcules seen and unseen. Do you know how many millions are killed every minute in the water which we drink or food which we eat? How does it strike you?

"Fish eats fish, bird eats bird, beast eats beast, man eats all. Asleep or awake, sitting or walking, in our very breathing, we kill countless hosts of beings. All the elements—air, earth, and water—are full of life which wittingly or unwittingly we kill every second of our existence. Nature is by its very constitution red in tooth and claw. How does it all strike you?"

"You seem to be driving towards some dreadful conclusion, although one has to accept the stern logic of what you say," said the Brahmin falteringly.

"This is the conclusion of the logic of facts. Only confused persons talk as if there is such a thing as absolute non-violence. Look you, who in this world does not harm others? Let one think however much, there is none in this world who is absolutely non-violent. It is all a question of degree: the bad harm more, the good to a less extent. Let alone physical harm and destruction; are there not a greater and subtler number of ways by which men harm others by envy, jealousy, ill-speech? Virtue and vice and right and wrong, lie inextricable," concluded the butcher.

IV

The Problem of Good and Evil

"You have shaken the very foundations of my belief. I do not know why you are doing it but I am getting afraid of you,"

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protested the Brahmin.

"I am going still further to rudely disturb your self-complacency. I want that you should not shut your eyes to the hard and cold facts of life. I want you to think for yourself so that you may solve the problems of life. Truth cannot be attained by the weak in spirit."

"I am catching something of your spirit. I shall take up your challenge and follow you unflinchingly wherever your enquiry may lead," proudly asserted the Brahmin.

"That is right. Gurus or preceptors test their disciples in numerous hard ways to find out whether they have got the right making of a man in them. Now consider the problem of good and evil in the world. The good man does not always reap good, nor the bad man always ill. The clever and wise fail in their calculations. The battle goes not always to the strong, but more often to the weak. One who is cruel, cunning, deceitful prospers in the world. Fortune favours oft-times the slothful and indolent and the dull of intellect, while she deserts the intelligent and industrious.

"One works unceasingly for a certain result which eludes him, while it falls like a ripe fruit into the mouth of one who never worked for it, expected it, or deserved it. People pray for children. Either they get more or when born they break the hearts of their parents. Some are born with a silver spoon in their mouths, some are born for poverty. Wealthy persons who have a surfeit of the good things of life are more often sickly and scarcely able to eat while the strong and the poor have scarcely a morsel to eat. If men could mould the world to their heart's desire, they would neither die, nor grow old, nor fall sick; they would never see the ills of life and they would have all the things they long for; men would have all these and more if there were not such a thing as Fate," said the butcher.

"True it is that all beings strive to rise from good to better, and from lower to higher, but none is able to gain it. There is no problem greater than this in the world, the disparity supposed or real between worth and its reward. Caught in the inexorable trap of circumstances beyond their grasp or remedy men squeak or weep, or sit helpless, or gnash their teeth, or run mad, or blaspheme, or deny God," sighed the Brahmin.

"You are right. That is the source and origin of all the religions, philosophies, and speculations, individual and collective on the earth. These range from burying one's head in the sand like an ostrich, denial of a superintending providence, setting up of and ascribing to Matter, Nature or chance man's inability or non-necessity to know and grasp the sorry scheme of things, setting up of rival and permanent powers of darkness

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which the very powers of light and goodness themselves are not able to overcome; and finally attributing all the evil to God Himself," said the butcher.

"You have raised more bogeys than you have laid. But is there any real solution?" asked the Brahmin.

"There should be or else man is doomed; there is, or else man is not worth his name which connotes thinking," asserted the butcher.

"I am eager to hear the answer. That way must lie salvation," said the Brahmachari.

Replied the butcher, "True, logic, experience, science and philosophy are able to trace and affirm the existence of an unbroken chain of cause and effect in the material universe."

The Brahmachari said promptly: "Because this is all in the gross and we are able to trace action and reaction as cause and effect."

"The mind and spirit of man are able to mould, modify and produce this cause and effect in the material world. But to deny it in the subtler field of the mind or spirit, which shapes our inner being, as well as in the experienced world outside, is childish and absurd. It is mere wishful thinking. Man not only wants to act as he lists untrammelled but also to escape its inevitable consequences. It is bad logic, bad science, bad philosophy, bad religion, bad everything. It is not satisfying to the intellect or the spirit," said the butcher.

"So you say man has free will before the act or the Karma, but not with regard to the Phala or the fruit or result. So Karma and Phala, action and result, fixed fate and free will are but interchangeable terms, the same thing looked at from two aspects. Man is the moulder and master of his own destiny. That is a comforting doctrine anyway," acknowledged the Brahmin.

V

A Vision and the Life Story of the Butcher

"This is comforting not only to you but you are now in a position to understand and appreciate the secret of my life and why I still continue the vocation of a butcher. Be pleased to enter the sanctum sanctorum of my house and to behold with your naked eyes the visible Gods whom I worship."

So saying, his strange host led the Brahmin to an outhouse well-furnished, neat and comfortable, which was festooned and decorated like a temple. Entrance into Mithila and its very air and surroundings had touched the Brahmin who had come from afar, seeking after the truth and the knowledge which saves, and put him on the alert. But lo, instead of the resplendant gods whom he expected in bodily presence, he found but the two aged parents of the butcher.

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'Behold the gods whom I worship. Like Rama who worshipped Dasaratha and Kausalya, I know none other higher than my parents. Bow unto them and receive their blessings."

Strangely disturbed in his thoughts and values of life, the Brahmin did so, and long and earnestly he conversed with his extraordinary host and his parents and witnessed with what religious awe and tenderness the butcher attended upon and served his parents.

"I now see light," exclaimed the Brahmin voluntarily. "I sought truth, but in a wrong way. Since, however, truth saves, it sent me on to the Brahmani. She in her turn sent me on to you. And I am glad and proud that instead of shutting my eyes and ears to the call of truth, in the pride and hardness of my heart, I obeyed and came hither.

"You have shaken me to the very core, but oh, blessed Rishi, for such I deem you—much have you suggested and made me think. You have taught me by your way of life the very god, Dakshinamurti, more than all the sages and scriptures can. Be pleased to tell me the story of your life."

To this the butcher replied: "I was about to give the finishing touch to the purpose for which you were forwarded here, by the narration of my life-story. My last life was that of a Brahmin. I formed an intimacy with a king who taught me archery. I was so proud of my acquisition of this art that I became vain, and practised and displayed it on all occasions. Gradually my nature itself underwent a transformation from the Sattvic one of a Brahmin to the Rajasic one of a Kshatriya.

"I went to the forest one day and aimed an arrow, like King Dasaratha, at what in the distance looked like an animal. But instead came the cry of a human being and I found that I had pierced a sage. Fortunately the blow was not mortal. I extracted the arrow, applied healing herbs and the sage recovered. He cursed me, however, saying 'your nature has changed into that of a hunter and a butcher. Run out the course you have begun by being born a butcher in your next life.'

"My revulsion and repentance were so intense and sincere that I fell at the feet of the sage and begged for a reprieve from his curse. 'I cannot do it and I will not do it,' said the inexorable sage. 'You must taste the fruit of your own action, however bitter. But since your repentance is deep, I grant you this boon: You will be a Jatismara i.e. you will carry the knowledge of this life in your next. Manu, the great Law-giver has stated that such knowledge comes only to those who have performed their duties aright, whose minds thereby are purified; who can look before and after, and hence can mould their lives.

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So I was born with this knowledge, with this secret of the Law of Karma, of cause and effect. This is my last life."

"Pray teach me and finish what you have so well begun. I fall at thy feet, take refuge in thee as a Guru, and in word and in spirit ask thee to impart to me the highest knowledge of God or the Self, whichever it is, as enjoined by the Sastras," said the Brahmin.

"You are right and I waited but for this declaration of thine and this approach to me as a Guru by thee as a Sishya. The whole world is bound by the three Gunas or qualities of Sattva or light, Rajas or activity, and Tamas or darkness and ignorance. All beings perform actions which come under one or more of these qualities and take the life of and are born according to the tenor of their actions. There are four castes among men—the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya and the Sudra. The bounds of these four, no doubt, are settled and defined by past actions and determine the present. *But the spirit which is inside every being, laughs at and scorns such barriers.* I am in reality a Brahmin by my spiritual knowledge and you did well in coming to me, bowing to me and praying for knowledge," said the butcher tenderly raising up the Brahmin and embracing him.

"Though I anticipate in humility what you will say, oh, say it with thy lips," prayed the Brahmin.

"You have committed a dereliction of duty in abandoning your aged and blind parents, in your mistaken search for a higher life. Go back and serve them, even as I serve my parents, as the Brahmani serves her husband. Each man is born into his caste and his calling by his past acts. He cannot jump out of them just as he cannot jump out of himself. One's own duties not only suffice but should be sacred to every man, however lowly or mean they may be. It is spiritual transgression and death to abandon one's *swadharma,* one's own duties, and to resort to another, however apparently superior and attractive. God lies only in one's duties," said the butcher solemnly.

"But is not Karma or duty never-ending? Does it not bind man permanently in a chain of cause and effect?" asked the Brahmin.

"Yes," answered the butcher, "there is no loop-hole for the ignorant, for those who have not escaped from their senses, their desires, their Ego. Five senses and the mind are the six horses, the body the chariot, and the Jiva the traveller within.

"If man entrusts the driving to his higher Self, God Narayana, and curbs his senses, he thereby reaches his goal,—Vishnu Padam or the highest heaven, release and immortality.

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"Just as poisons if purified are efficacious in the highest degree as panaceas, Karma or action can be deprived of its virus, if dissociated from Kama or desire, the hankering after results.

"The link in the chain which binds the Ego to the eternal wheel of Samsara, cause and effect, birth and death, is snapped. The act becomes motiveless, the Karma becomes Akarma or non-action, and scriptures proclaim that the highest duty is Nishkama Karma, duty done for duty's sake, without motive, in a spirit of self-sacrifice, for Loka Aradhana, the maintenance and uplift of the Universe. For God is everywhere and He rests in all things and all things rest in Him. The best worship of Him, the easiest way to attain Him or salvation is to dedicate all one's acts to Him.

"I have taught you that there is no high and low in Karma, that one's own duties are the best and it is the only means of salvation if rightly performed. Go back, serve your parents, perform the duties of a Grihasta or a householder. Stations in life as of a Brahmachari or a student, a Grihasta or a householder, a Sanyasi or a recluse, matter not; they are mere names. It is the spirit that matters and knowledge comes in all states, if one's duties are well performed."

And the Brahmin went back home as he was bid, served his parents devoutly, and performed his duties so well, that he got illumination ere long. And he handed down the tradition and secret of this Brahma Vidya to a long line of successors starting with the Pativrata Brahmani as the great first teacher and the Dharmavyadha as the second, and with himself as third. □ □ □

If thou wouldst perfect thyself in Knowledge, perfect thyself in Love. If thou wouldst reach the Highest, ceaselessly cultivate a loving and compassionate heart.

—James Allen

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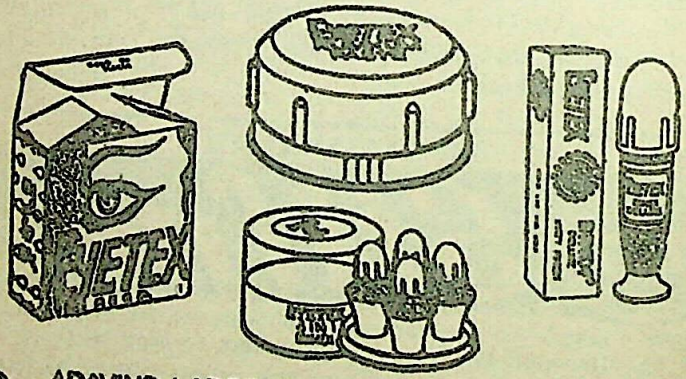

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Unless "cult-egoism" can be got rid of, there will be no meeting of minds or faiths but only studies, surveys, statistics and theories of an ephemeral nature, mostly by unqualified people, says the celebrated author, presently Professor and Head of the Department of English, Vishwabharati University, who is convinced that we have to learn more and more from men who have lived rather than from those who talk loud of religion.—Ed.

Comparing Religions

a plea for dialogue

SISIRKUMAR GHOSE

WITH knowledge explosion ours has perforce become an age of intellectual exchange and accommodation. From the tribe we have come to mankind, in the global village. Born into *a* culture, we have to acquire planetary culture. But knowledge is not understanding, not wisdom. The scholar is not a sage.

The fact remains that, under pressure, there has been a greater willingness to know each other's faith; even the Catholic church has tried to talk to Protestants and Communists alike. The Eastern faiths too are not in a mood to be patronised or misunderstood. There is an enhanced respect for even the primitive and pre-historic religions. Here and there one comes across voices that speak of the religious experience of mankind and not of this or that sect or group. This is part of an education which none of us can hope to escape.

Historically, the publication of the *Sacred Books of the East* and the labour of the anthropologists converged to give Comparative Religion an easy academic *entree*. In advanced circles it came to be realised that unless we understood it in relation to one or more, we do not understand our own religion. Isolated superiority was not possible. Beware of the man who has read only one book. "As is one's faith, so one becomes." Today this must include the faith of others as well.

The two World Wars and their ideologies have further emphasised the need for co-existence, which has to contain revolutions of every shade. Luckily, the old conflict between science and religion no longer bothers us. Inter-religious studies have appreciably shifted

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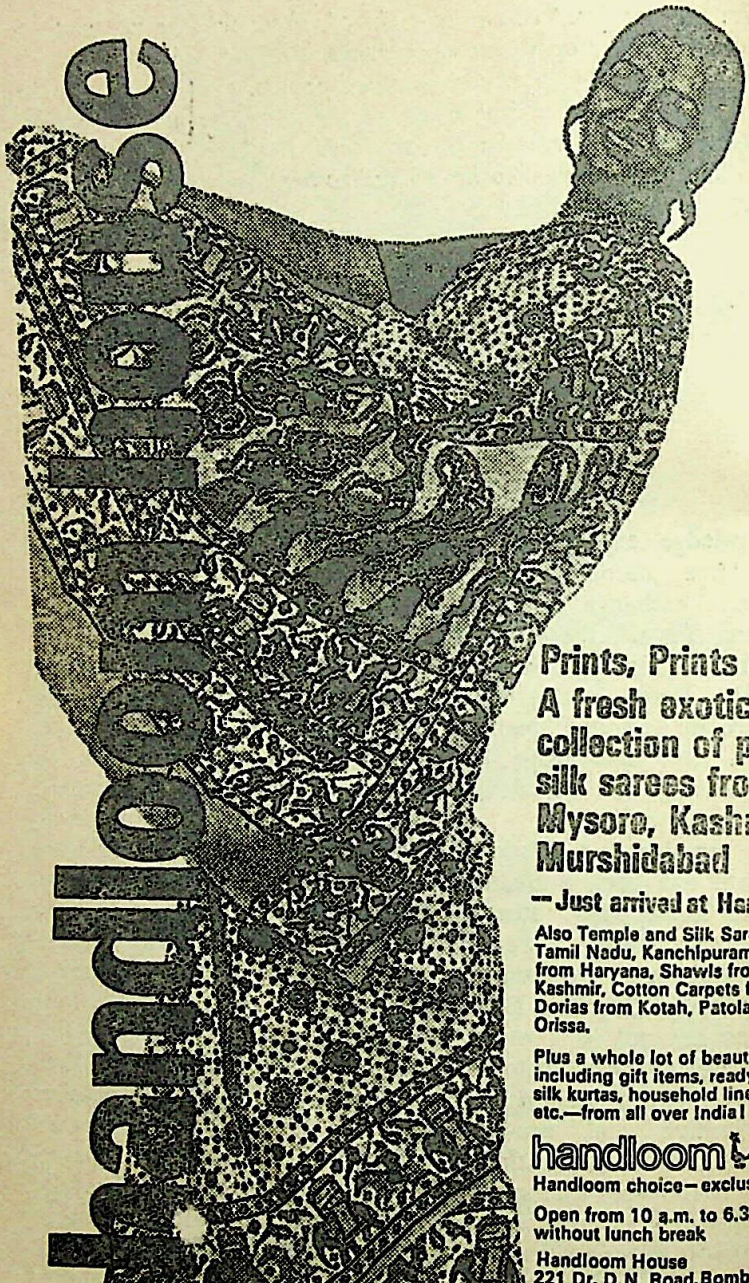

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from the outer to the inner, to human consciousness and subjectivity. No doubt man has to affirm himself as himself but, in order to remain human, he has also to share and belong to a community. "No man is an island."

As the experience of love, poetry and religion show, human nature is dialogical. Love needs another; otherwise it becomes self-love (which, in most cases, it is). Poetry, as Frost said, is a lover's quarrel with the world. Religion is a reaching out to the Unknown, the Mystery, the X element. Sometimes the dialogue may veer towards monologue. As some have held, the higher forms of religion depend on man's solitariness. But even when alone one is not free from the awareness of others. The great are always alone, without ceasing to be compassionate, *Nafas al-Rehman*, as the Sufis would say. The tendency to encapsulate oneself in the "small I" is calculated to shut us off from the rest, the larger reality, a disease from which nearly everyone suffers.

The basis of dialogue is the person. His enlargement is its proper end. "Where I am authentically myself," says Jaspers, "I am certain that I am not through myself". Dialogue is not conversation in the ordinary sense of passing cheap judgements on men and events. Rather is it a drawing together, a discovery, a creation. This may reveal itself in small things as in the great, what the poet calls the small unremembered acts of kindness. Passing salt or sugar across the table, a smile to welcome the stranger can be enough to establish that the other is there and one cares for him as and where he is, without wishing him to be different.

II

Interfaith dialogue is not just a pleasant way of being mildly superior and tolerant about the follies of mankind. In fact it is a recognition of the historic context in which we happen to be and to make sense of it. This means that no religion can claim the monopoly of Truth or to having exhausted the mystery of being and becoming. Obviously the dialogue cannot be confined to the conceptual level or to any single semantic framework. Without a sympathy for alternative and unfamiliar modes of perceiving reality dialogue can but fail. A sensitive participant may reveal, aesthetically if not spiritually (but think of Sri Ramakrishna), an insight into another's world-view or way of being. A release from conditioning is basic to emotional maturity, the continuing conversation which is the heart of civilisation, the oecumenism of tomorrow.

Dialogue is an awareness of a Thou and, beyond that, of the Beyond, the Eternal Source. But a too systematic science, history

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or sociology of religion may turn existence into what Buber called "a system of hide-outs." Among the world religions, Buddhism, rooted in *Karuna* and *Maitri*, Compassion and Friendliness, has from the beginning taken a sober, non-aggressive stance from which it has not deviated. In one of the edicts of Asoka it is said that by honouring the faith of others one honours one's own, a remarkable confession. A harmony of human quests was the *sine qua non* of ancient wisdom. The truth is one, the wise speak with many voices, this cuts at the root of bigotry.

Even when differences are admitted, these need not cause undue division. In any case, the nineteenth-century hypothesis of a universal or uniform religion offers but the illusion of a solution. As Swami Vivekananda knew: "No one form of religion will do for all. No man is born to any religion; he has his religion in his soul." The soul religion escapes the rigidity of a formal system, the literal religion. A time may come when every person will have a religion—of no religion—unto himself.

History demands that we begin not only an outer but an inner dialogue in which all world-hypotheses will be equally welcome. It is not necessary for religion to be similar or identical. So long as the religions of the world continue to hold themselves as the sole repositories of the Word and the Way, the quality of dialogue is bound to suffer. It will then be little more than Apologetics. Then Comparative Religion turns into Competitive Religion. But, revelation is a universal gift, not a parochial possession. In the life of the spirit there are always fresh chapters to add.

Comparative Religion of this kind, broad, understanding, looking before and after, is not easy to practise. Two factors point to the need to make it real: first, man is not an object, but a subject, as much an I am as an intersubjective We. The true person is the cosmic person. Secondly, only an awareness, if not knowledge, of the totality of religious experience can help us to a true understanding of its role in the human evolution. For all we know it may point Beyond Religion.

Unless "cult-egoism" can be got rid of, there will be no meeting of minds or faiths, only studies, surveys, statistics and theories, mostly by the unqualified (*anadhikaris*), that have their day and then are heard no more. Facts and their interpretation do not belong to the same level. Pettiness padded with pedantry is not the way out. On this score we may have more to learn from men like Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Aurobindo than from professionals telling us more and more about less and less, "prattling before the People of the Path." □ □ □

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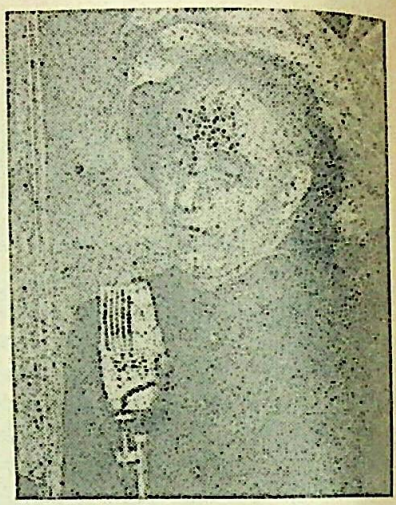

Apa Pant comes of the former ruling family of Aundh, which played a prominent part in the stirring history of the Maratha struggle for power. In his own time he helped to make history of a different kind, namely the Aundh experiment of constitutional reforms under which his father, the Raja of Aundh, devolved power to his people in consultation with Mahatma Gandhi.

From 1937, when Apa Pant returned from his studies in England as an Oxford M. A. and a Barrister-at-Law, he was for ten years absorbed in the human, political and practical problems of 'working' democracy in Aundh, becoming Chief Minister by election, that survived the strains of World War II, but was then overtaken by the dynamic changes consequent upon Indian Independence.

In 1948, Jawaharlal Nehru chose him to be India's Commissioner in British East Africa, and concurrently as an alternate delegate to the United Nations. His next posting was as India's Political Officer in the Himalayan States of Sikkim and Bhutan.

From 1961 to 1964 Shri Pant was India's Ambassador in Djakarta. This was followed by two years as Ambassador to Norway and three in the Cairo Embassy, during which he had the honour, unique for a non-Muslim but in his case, singularly appropriate, of being invited to give a public address from the pulpit of the great Islamic University of Al-Azhar. In 1969 he came to London as High Commissioner and in 1972 was posted as Indian Ambassador in Rome. He was also awarded the Padma Shri for distinguished services.

He helped the Bhavan in establishing its centre in London in 1972 when he was High Commissioner there. With his philosophical and spiritual background he had high regard for the Bhavan's work in the cause of Indian Culture. After he was posted in Rome as Ambassador, he invited Shri J. L. Hathi, our Vice-President, and Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary, to Italy to set up in Rome the nucleus of a centre.

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The World Needs
BHARATIYA VIDYA

APA PANT

IT is a pleasure to write for the *Bhavan's Journal*. For nearly 23 years, this splendid publication has been a companion and a constant source of inspiration to me. I know that it has brought a new vision and understanding to millions all over the world. How one wishes that like in England every important city of the world would be able to organise a centre of cultural and spiritual studies and practices under the auspices of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

How keen and serious is the interest shown by thousands all over the world in Bharatiya Vidya! Those who have seen or can sense the "where and to what" this life of conflict, tensions, frustrations and sorrow lived on the material plane with profit, pleasure or power as the main or only energising motivations leads to, turn now to Bharatiya Vidya.

In Bharat itself one must examine whether we also are getting hypnotised by the glitter of the *Rajas teja* of civilizations based on the material philosophy of power, prosperity and pleasure. Already some of the contradictions and confusions arising out of this philosophy are visible amongst us. Stagnant societies felt attracted by the vigour, valour and vitality of fast-moving, success-and-profit-oriented societies. Would they (that is, we) follow the same path trod by the "developed" societies?

Dominant Experience

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cultural changes are transforming the very perspective of personal action and life of an individual. The relationship of the individual to the whole system of authority, what we call the State, the structure of power and its use in every society in every country, is undergoing a sea of change. "Authority" that is, the machinery of governance, the Parliaments, the Councils, the bureacracy, the various institutions today in no society seem to be able to satisfy the ever-increasing range of the "demands" of the individual.

Today, the socio-economic-cultural structure of our societies is based, operates, moves and is stabilised, on the growing, ever-increasing demands (desires) of the individual or groups. We must see this clearly in order to examine the great problems that confront us today. If the individual would refuse to buy or would buy less, the momentum at which this "consumer" materialistic society is moving "forward", "progressing" will be lost; there will be stagnation or recession. So "demands" i.e. "desires" must increase. They must be stimulated, so must production. In fact that the new demands mean only variations in the same or similar range of desires, such as cars, clothes, houses, vacations, food, travel. But "consumerism" is only possible if there is "choice."

When the State promises to, and often does, control or guarantee the satisfaction of at least some of the basic desires, or needs of the individual, need the individual work at all? Suppose education, medicine, old age benefit, housing unemployment benefit, holidays—in short all that a Welfare-State, is supposed to do—is promised and efficiently given by the State, then the urge to work diminishes. Does it not? The "desire—work — satisfaction" equation is replaced by "desire — state apparatus — satisfaction". With the "work" part of this equation becoming inoperative, the "consumer" society which must produce more and more goods to keep itself going, which means hard work and application of science and technology to production, is in distress. 'Consumerism" cannot operate without hard, continuous, efficient, competitive, sophisticated work. Those societies who turn "work" into a new principle of life, a new "faith", and operate a vigorous system of more and more production, evolve a new ethos, and can also stabilise themselves as successful "consumer" societies.

Can the demands or desires of various groups in a "consumer" society be regulated, brought to an equilibrium by the pressures and counter pressures of the different groups in a particular society, automatically, autonomously or through some other machinery, agency, "ouside" it, i.e. a "State", a hierarchy, a bureaucracy? For

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TOWARDS A NEW DEAL FOR THE COMMON MAN

20-Point Economic Programme

MAHARASHTRA MARCHES ON

Director General of Information & Public Relations
Government of Maharashtra, Bombay

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a materialistic society, ever-increasing "desires" and their satisfaction are the main, if not the only, motive force to keep it going and for the so-called "progress" of it. But can "desires" that operate, that can function only within a limited range of mental (cultural), emotional and intellectual habits, be a permanent, long-lasting motive force? Repeated satisfaction of desires brings boredom. How much stimulation can a mind bear? Even their very satisfaction leads to exhaustion. How much change and variation can one bring about in desires and their satisfaction?

Power is needed to maintain domineering socio-economic systems, and pursuit of power and maintenance of it by every means, at all costs, becomes an indispensable part of this "pursuit of happiness" through the satisfaction of desires. These contradictions are inherent in a system that has its momentum in the so-called "progress" based on desires and their satisfaction on the material plane alone.

Is there a more rational approach towards the satisfaction of wants and desires? A more disciplined one, a less crude, nervous and excited one. A more normal, natural, relaxed one, a more compassionate one than a competitive and a cruel one.

Science and technology, management and organisation have created the possibility of every human being on the face of this earth living in comfort, cooperation, harmony and security. But by systematic, deliberate overstimulation of desire and basing the socio-cultural-economic pattern of life on "consumerism" as the dynamics of the modern society, insurmountable contradictions are now facing us. It is to be accepted that what has been created by the mind of man, that is by science and technology, and which does bring for the first time since the dawn of history a possibility of relieving mass poverty, disease, inequality, exploitation, cannot and need not now be discarded. But we must take care that this mind-created "power" of man does not destroy him. The destruction threatened is not so much external or physical, such as war, disease, famine as those matters will be taken good care of by the game of balance of power now played so assiduously everywhere. But it is the internal, neuro-physical, mental, intellectual, emotional and spiritual collapse from within of the individual himself that threatens us. The pursuit of happiness through desire fulfilment is bringing about physical-psychological exhaustion, neurosis, mental apathy and boredom, intellectual stagnation and cynisism, lack to emotional stability and a spiritual vacuum. Man seems unable to establish a satisfying, relaxed, normal relationship either with his

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fellow human beings or with his environment. Excited, over-stimulated, the mind seeks refuge in state of stupor, gets into a shell, and if this is not possible, through continuous, repetitive, boring work, or sex, crime, drugs. The solution for this tension, thus, is attempted only within the mental-physical narrow range of awareness and inevitably leads to further tensions and conflicts.

Can one see all this clearly? See how the mind-created desires enslave the mind itself and project, perpetuate conflict and tensions, and how one finds it almost impossible to free and liberate oneself from this vicious circle! Of course, most of us may be quite content to live within the narrow, frustrating circle of desires and the never-ending attempt at their satisfaction. Only those who see the stupidity of it all could develop a different attitude, an approach of detachment, *anasakti* towards desires themselves as well as the attempts—frustrated or successful—at satisfying them.

A clear vision and the resulting detachment, will free the mind of this illusion, *Maya,* calm it down, and enable it to function at a higher level of creative, compassionate intelligence. Only when the mind falls silent and is relaxed, it can function creatively, intelligently. This in a "modern" society is never possible, or allowed to happen.

It is not important how many see all this clearly and do something about it. It is not the numbers that are important, but with what intensity, clarity, the truth of it all is seen and lived even by a selected few. No operation, no activity of the mind can bring about liberation. It is only the truth seen, realised, experienced clearly that brings about liberation or freedom and projects tremendous energy, a new power of compassion, love.

When you are controlled by desires you create sorrow for yourself and the society. *Bhoga* or enjoyment at the lower level is not Anand, joy or contentment. By renunciation i.e. Tyaga or sacrifice, it can be achieved. It is Yoga, the experience of "Oneness", *Advaita,* that can release one from the enslavement to Desire and bring in a new creative energy that will transform this mad, sad world.

Some, a few societies today are trying hard to bring control and a new discipline to the wants and desires of the individual for the sake of the community. In India in a village community, the individual had only "duties" to perform. Only when these duties known as Dharma were properly performed, "rights" ensued. Today we talk of only rights and forget duties; we have demands, no obligations.

But even in disciplining of desires on the material, mental plane for the family and community,

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Nation is still within the limits and grooves of "happiness" through sense gratification — houses, health, education, occupation—are indeed important. Without these, the life of an individual is indeed a long suffering misery. But the spiritual traditions of the East and the West have a totally different approach. The Indian tradition, for example, states time and again that life controlled by the senses would always be limited and forever creates conflict and sorrow. The Buddha proclaimed that the root of suffering is desire. He laid down the eightfold path to go beyond desire and suffering. To attain an experience on a totally different dimension, one must go beyond the reach of the senses, to Nirvana. In this state of awareness, compassion or love will be the dominant experience.

What do we do, then, with science and technology which are expected to bring power and pleasure, sense of security and progress? Without the help of them we cannot now feed the billions that inhabit the world! How can we discard them? Who will give up the benefits that they have brought in fighting disease, famine, even inequality? We dream and demand physical, psychological, security through their help.

But if we see clearly we would find that these benefits are not available in full measure as those in power use science and technology to enlarge and concentrate their own power and that management and organisation are used to perpetuate corruption and exploitation! In all systems all over the world we see the stupidities and crimes committed in the name of "Science and Technology," the armament race of missiles and bombs and aeroplanes and submarines, which can never be used, as they would destroy verily this small globe of ours! Whom do the "leaders" deceive? Individuals all over the world today are getting sick of this game of "power and politics." This is so in Communist as well as non-Communist societies. Both these systems and their minor variations fundamentally have the same objectives: Power, Pleasure, Profit and for acquiring these use Science and Technology!

How can compassion, love, friendship, Truth, Beauty survive in these dull, drab, hard, cruel, tense, selfish societies? Science and technology, creatures of the mind of man, surely are not at fault? Who then is?

Surely at fault, the culprits are, all of us who do not see this clearly and have the courage to state it openly. By submitting to these stupid systems we in fact cooperate with them, uphold them. Is it not now time to proclaim the truth from every housetop? But the problem is of seeing the truth of it all, (or the falsehood of it) *clearly*. That is not possible

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when the mind is full of fear, anger, hate.

"Mind is the cause, an instrument that enslaves man and negates his liberation, Moksha: "*Mana Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayoh*".

It is said of a yogi: "*Na Dweshti Sampravrittani Na Nivrittani Kankshati,* that is, a yogi "does not hate (or is irritated by) what has occurred nor does he long for what is far or gone away. We do exactly the opposite all the while, don't we? We, all the while, think or feel that what is far away or in the future will bring us more pleasure. By this "thought" or "desire" for the future we are, in fact, in conflict, at a tension, with what is "now". The "present", in the process just escapes us as we run after the self-generated desires, usually full of uncertainty or anxiety.

In the great epic poem, the *Bhagavad Gita,* Arjuna, the hero, complains to his Divine charioteer Krishna, "*Chanchalam Hi Manah Krishna Pramathi, Balawad Dridham*"; "Oh! Krishna! the mind is so restless, proud and determined in deliberately making mistakes, very strong and obstinate, and inflexible. Lord Krishna agrees but advises: "*Abhyasena Tu Kaunteya Vairagyena Cha Grihyate*". By serious study, practice and by desirelessness it (the mind) can be controlled."

Krishna therefore advises Arjuna that the restless mind can become calm only through *Vairagya,* desirelessness and detachment, that is "*Anasakti-Yoga*".

The mind pines for happiness, harmony, love but gets lost in the desires of the senses and experiences only tensions, conflicts. Krishna says to Arjuna that the mind will give up this futile search for happiness in sensate life only if it knows and experiences the ultimate inexhaustible joy that is within one's "self". "*Param Drishtva Nivartate*". The *Vrittis,* or the turbulence of the mind will be quietened by the joy eternal available within onself—(*Ni,* i.e. non,—*Vritti,* i.e. turbulence).

Lord Krishna further elucidates: "*Yato-yato nischarati manas chanchalam-asthiram; tatastato niyamyaitat atmanyeva vasam nayet.*" That is "wherever the restless unsteady mind wanders, from that point (by watchfulness and determination) it should be brought back to and controlled at the self within.

In the Buddhist traditions, both the Mahayana and Hinayana, great stress is put on "Silent watchfulness" or *Sakshi Bhava.* It is said that a wise person is aware of the act of his eating when he is eating, or listening when he is listening or walking when he is walking, or sitting when he is sitting, or sleeping when he is sleeping, or dreaming when he is dreaming and or being aware when he is aware. Thus his high-

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er "Self" is ever watchful of the lower "self".

In the *Bhagavad Gita* this is put in a slightly different way by stating the seeing, hearing, tasting and all other bodily or mental activities happens as a result of action and interaction of the three Gunas or energies, the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and that the wise man is untouched, unmoved, unaffected by all these happenings on the sensate level. Silent watchfulness, Sakshi Bhava, of each and every action by the "Self" of the self immediately reduces involvement in and attachment to the sensate activities and the consequent thought process and thus reduces the tensions. All activities, happenings through your "self" and around your "self" you watch and are aware of are, as it were, from a different, wider, "non-self-centered" point of view. Therefore the agony of success or defeat, gain or loss, that is anxiety, worry, is non-existent. This is called the *Samatva Bhava*: *Samatvam Yoga Uchyate*: "Equanimity is Yoga".

In the Buddhist traditions there are practices by which each and every thought that is uncharitable, frivolous, full of sorrow, anxiety, anger, doubt, hate is instantly and deliberately, replaced by a counter thought which is its opposite. Thus the power and the hold over you of the "habit energy", as it is called by the Buddhists, of a "bad" useless, fruitless, tension-producing thought is broken down, systematically. To do this, the method of "waching your breath" is used. So also is used often a "Mantra," sacred, secret sounds "energised" and made powerful by ancient or modern sages, saints, mystics. Symbols, rituals, dances, pictures, music is also used for the same purpose of relaxing your-"self" from the strangle hold of your *own* thoughts.

Another very interesting and important approach put forward in the *Bhagavad Gita* in the same context is: "*Atmaupamyena Sarvatra, samam pashyati yorjuna; sukhamva yadi va duhkham sa yogi paramo matah.*" "He who sees himself in everything and everywhere (all the time) as his own self he is the greatest of all yogis."

A mind full of thoughts functions only in the past or future and separates itself from what *is*. That is the cause of the genesis of all conflict and sorrow. A silent mind is aware "at-one-moment" of all that is. It is a totally different quality of awareness and we cannot really define this awareness by the term "mind." It is awareness, complete, compassionate, simultaneous, undivided, without conflict or tension. The *Anubhava* is: "*Vishtabhyaham idam sarvam ekamshena sthito jagat.*" "All this whole is only a part of my "Self." The awareness is awareness without words or conceptualised forms.

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BHAVAN'S

BOOKS

FOR

BETTER READING

Action orginating in such a total, unitary, compassionate, free awareness is complete, constructive and brings harmony, hapiness.

The silent awareness, a quiet mind would surely enable one to see through the folly and madness, the fruitlessness, of all action that originates in greed, anger, hate, pride, jealousy, or action motivated by the lust for power or profit. Seeing clearly how such activity leads to tensions, conflicts, sorrow, what does one do?

Obviously, one dissociates oneself, detaches oneself, from such activity whether it be of individuals, groups or the so called nations.

The more individuals seeing the madness around them detach themselves from it, deny their support to it, those who indulge in such folly would get sooner isolated. The Pyramids of Power that crushes the human spirit will collapse because they lack support for it; without acceptance, tolerance, a folly, a madness, an illusion cannot last.

Have we not seen this happen often enough in the so-called "practical" world of yesterday and today? Wrong action, that is born out of hate, pride of power, anger or greed has a momentum, an energy, a power which gives an illusion of success, achievement for a short while. But the inevitable laws of Karma catch up on all actions born on the plane of "thought". The cycle of "cause and effect" turns a full circle and Power Pyramids, empires, the great and the mighty go their way to disappear in the Karmic current of history. This chain of Karmic Retribution is relentless. But it operates only on the level of "thoughts". The Real, the Supreme, the Blissful, the Eternal is untouched by it. To end the enslavement of the mind and to rise in the sunshine of this Enlightenment is the real purpose of life. *Uttishthata jagrata prapya varan nibodhata.* "Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached."

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Savings are the foundation of national prosperity. In recent years, the Government of India has intensified its efforts to induce people to save more and invest. Bhavan's Journal *has pleasure in reproducing, in a series, a book on* How to Save & Invest: Guidelines for Fixed Income Groups, *by Shri M. R. Pai, Economic Commentator. His earlier publication* Why Are Prices Rising? *was serialised in* Bhavan's Journal. *Shri Pai is the Hon. Secretary of the Bombay Branch of the All-India Bank Depositors' Association and an honorary Vice-President of the Forum of Free Enterprise. For the past 20 years he is engaged in public education in economic affairs.*

How to Save and Invest

guidelines for fixed income groups

M. R. PAI

I

Key to Success in Life

A SUCCESSFUL, self-made man was once asked: "What is the secret of your success in life?" He said: "Two words: SAVE and KNOW." Every day, we should *learn something new and useful*, and there is so much we can learn. Every day, we should *save something*. Except the very poor who struggle for existence, every person can and should save something.

II

The Philosophy of Savings

To save is an *individual necessity* and a *national duty* in India today. We should understand both these aspects of savings clearly, and develop a philosophy of SAVINGS.

Savings—a Sacred National Duty

To appreciate why savings are a national duty, we should understand what the economists call the vicious circle of poverty and stagnation. In simplified form, it is this: in underdeveloped countries like India, many people live on the margin of subsistence, that is, a hand-to-mouth existence. Whatever little they produce is consumed by them in order merely to live.. So, there are no savings from their income. Without

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savings, there can be no fresh investment, which means production does not increase. Therefore, there is little additional income generation. People remain economically where they are in this vicious circle of poverty-low-income - nil-savings-no - investment, low-production-stagnant - income, and consequent continuation of poverty. This circle of poverty and stagnation has, therefore, got to be broken to develop the country. This can be done by increasing savings with people who can aflord to save. Hence, to save is a sacred national duty in order to remove poverty and develop the country.

Savings—An Individual Necessity

Savings are an individual necessity. There are many good reasons why every individual should save.

First of all, there are expenses for contingencies like illness. Some money should always be available for such unexpected situations.

Secondly, there are commitments like education of children. As children grow up and attend higher classes, educational expenses also increase. It may not be possible to meet all such expenses from current savings. Therefore, savings are necessary.

Thirdly, there are unavoidable social commitments like weddings or religious ceremonies. Happily, the trend these days is to avoid lavish expenditure on such functions. The old social custom requiring even the poor to spend lavishly is dying out as a result of spread of education, pressure of growing public opinion as also compulsions of economic realities. Still, some expenditure on such functions is unavoidable and has to be provided for. For this purpose, savings are necessary.

Fourthly, savings are necessary for one's old age. In some countries, every citizen is looked after by the Government after the age of 60 or 65 till his or her death: This is done by collecting a part of his or her earnings during the working life, and applying that amount to old age pension of all citizens. In our country, at this stage of our economic development, it is not possible to set up social security measures on that scale. Therefore, every individual has to save for his old age to look after himself. Moreover, the old system of Joint Family, which was a sort of voluntary social security system, is also fast breaking up under the impact of industrialisation.

Savings and Inflation

Fifthly, because of inflation savings and wise investment become necessary. Inflation, or a steady all-round rise in prices, is what economists describe as a secular trend all over the world. The period 1957 to 1974 was an era of inflation in our own country. When there is inflation,

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MANAGING TRUSTEE

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the real income and savings of people are reduced.

There is a major difference between inflation in underdeveloped and developed countries which increases the need for individual saving. In economically advanced countries, governments protect citizens in their old age through social security. Moreover, some of them have introduced what is known as Monetary Corrective with regard to long-term repayments. For instance, a life insurance policy is repaid on maturity in terms of the *purchasing power* of the amount contracted, and not just so many units of the currency. Similarly, pensions and loans are tagged to purchasing power of the currency. In contrast, in underdeveloped countries, the amount on maturity comes in depreciated purchasing power of the currency. Hence the need for individuals to save and also to protect themselves to as great an extent as possible against inflation by wise investment of savings.

Buying Leisure for Creativity

Sixthly, savings are necessary to buy leisure.

It is seldom realised by many that leisure is to be bought like any other commodity. Leisure too is required for fulfilling our creative personality. This is done in several ways by different individuals. Hobbies like stamp collection or paintnig or photography or embroidery or recreation like hiking or reading are possible in leisure hours. In the day-to-day world, after a physically tiring and mentally fatiguing day, many of these activities are not possible. Therefore, leisure in the shape of holidays is required. Leisure can be bought only with savings.

Savings for Public Service

Seventh, savings are necessary to buy us financial independence, a pre-requisite for public service.

While some people run after money for acquiring social status, for many of us money can buy independence in the sense that we can look after ourselves. A person who stands on his own feet is respected by society. It gives him time for public service. Every educated person has a duty to fulfil towards the country—some form of public service. This is possible only when there are savings and financial independence.

III

Methodology of Savings: the Approach

First Decision: Cash Preference and Liquidity

The first decision with regard to savings is to determine how much cash we want at any given time, and to arrange the balance of our savings in various forms of what economists call near-money. To put it in technical terms, what should be our cash preference and liquidity of savings.

The amount of cash we keep should be the minimum required for day-to-day needs. This has

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two advantages: first, risk of loss by theft etc. is minimised. Second, money can earn interest and grow elsewhere; at home it does not grow.

Part of savings should be kept in a savings bank account which earns some interest, and becomes available as and when needed. This amount should be sufficient to meet any contingencies like illness or a sudden travel or any other form of unexpected expenditure.

Next in liquidity ladder come short-term investments like fixed deposits or long-term investments like Units or Shares which *can* grow in value, earn an interest regularly, and can be easily converted into cash. These aspects, growth in value and liquidity, will be discussed later on while dealing with different forms of investment.

Finally, there are long-term investments whose liquidity is very low but which confer other benefits on the saver.

Savings begin in the Mind: Two Questions

The individual who wishes to save should start with the right psychological approach. It is essential to understand that the mind is like a monkey. It runs after every new product or service. It desires to possess everything which catches its momentary fancy. Hence the need to train ourselves in the habit of asking two vital question: *"Do I really need this particular thing? Can I afford it?"* It will be surprising to see in retrospect that most of the things we ardently desired for or bought on the spur of the moment because they caught our fancy were things we could very well have done without. Fortified with this right psychological approach, we can save considerably without much strain.

Train the Children

It is necessary to impart this training to all members of the family, particularly children. Cost consciousness should be imbibed in them from their very early days. Children have a habit of asking for everything they see. As they grow up, they ask for things which catch their fancy. At that stage, without denying them the things which we can afford and which give them joy the like of which they never get again when they grow up, we should make them understand the value and cost of it. A good beginning can be made by teaching them not to waste food. Whether they ask for a pencil or a bicycle they should be impressed with the value and cost of it and the need to buy it only when necessary, and to use it with care.

It is amazing to see how some children learn to be careful when they are explained the value of money, and the cost of various things they want to buy.

"I want a camera," says your little son. Do not say, "No."

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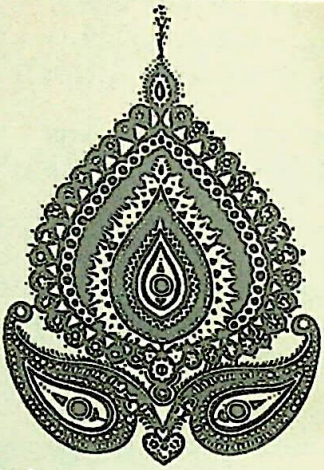

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"We shall certainly buy one, but which one do you need? What is its price? What do you need it for?" Encourage him to answer these and similar questions. More often than not, when he has found answers to those questions—which means he has collected sufficient information to get a true perspective of his request—he will say of his own accord: "I think we shall postpone the purchase."

If we do not teach cost-consciousness to children, and the habit of evaluating their desires on a rational basis, when they grow up they will become spendthrifts or careless in the management of money.

Thrift starts at an early age. It is the duty of parents to encourage this attitude towards money in children.

Savings is a Habit

Success in savings is a consequence of making it a habit. Like any other good habit, such as getting up early in the morning or personal cleanliness, savings should also become a habit.

There are several means for forming the savings habit. For instance, the post office offers the Recurring Deposit of five years' duration. We contribute an amount of our choice, subject to certain rules, every month for five years. Banks offer many schemes like cumulative or recurring deposit. One bank inculcated the habit of savings among small people by a unique scheme of collecting a small sum every day at their doorstep, and became big in the process. Buying an insurance cover is once again a means of saving regularly.

Every earner should contract one or more of such habit-forming savings schemes. The day we start earning, we should opt for it.

One useful hint for every salary earner: when you receive your first salary, either by cash or cheque, go to the nearest bank and open a Saving's Bank account. Bank the entire amount. Give to the Bank written instructions that on the particular day of the month when you bank your salary, a specified sum, say Rs. 10 or 50 or 100 or 300 or any suitable amount you can spare, should be transferred to a cumulative deposit of 12 or 24 or 36 months. At the end of the period, you will be pleasantly surprised to see a decent sum plus interest awaiting you. Withdraw the sum, and use the interest for any purchases you really require. Invest the rest, capital, in a long-term fixed deposit or shares or Units or any other form of capital-appreciating and interest-earning asset. Over a period of time, you will build up a substantial portfolio of investment!

The Pay Roll Saving scheme of Post Office is also an easy method of regular savings for office and factory employees.

(To be Continued)

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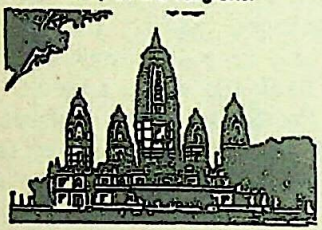
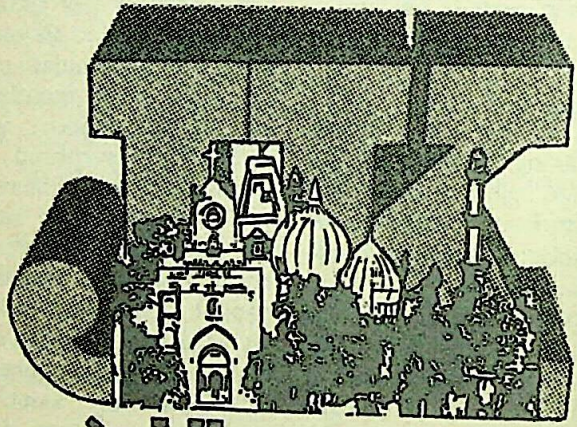
Laughters. Laughters. Aloud!

Once the food is in and the shelter above, man searches for faith. Faith that is religion. It kills superstitions and hatred towards others. It kindles the light within him. Religion is truth. Set one against another, and you destroy all the religions.



J.K. Organisation believes in man sublime. The Secularism. The efforts, besides achieving industrial feats, are directed to meet social responsibilities and religious obligations. Mosque, Chapel, Gurdwara at Jaykaypur (Orissa), exquisite Sri Radhakrishna Temple at Kanpur and temples at Brindaban, Raman Reti, Karvi are the living monuments of J.K. beliefs.

SECULARISM AND J.K.



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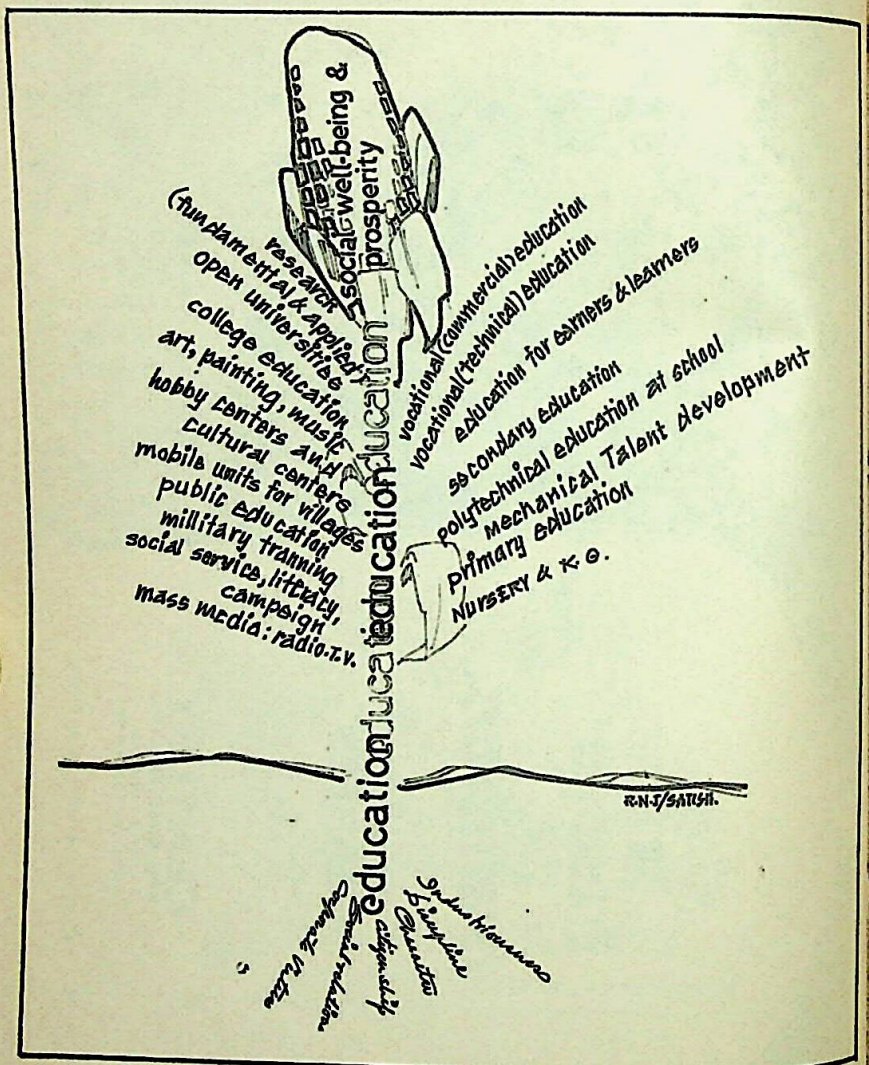
WORLD-WIDE TRENDS



Education should have sound roots by way of character, industry and discipline, should incorporate a wide compass of activities and yield the fruit of all-round well-being and prosperity for the entire society.

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IN EDUCATION—I

R. N. JOSHI

IN addition to being an eminent designs and construction engineer and being honoured for several of his technical contributions, Shri R. N. Joshi (67) was a member of the Syndicate and Senate of the University of Bombay for over a decade. He was the Dean of the Faculty of Technology for one year. He was a member of the General Council of Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR) and of National Council for Training of Vocational Trades, (NCTVT) Delhi, for three years. Closely connected with several educational institutions including Bhavan's Engineering College, he is on the Vocational Education Committee of the Government of Goa and High Level Committee on Education and Research of the Government of Maharashtra. The Manual and Mechanical Talent Development (MMTD) Scheme has been introduced in Goa under his advice and guidance.

Shri Joshi toured round the world and studied the education patterns in different countries. A rational thinker, Shri Joshi has applied his mind to the problem of appropriate education for all in our country. We have the pleasure of publishing his articles on "World-wide Trends in Education" in a series. The first article on education in Britain appears in this issue; education in Russia will follow.

The subject of education is being actively discussed in India. Shri Joshi's articles will acquaint the readers as to how the subject is tackled in other countries in comparison with ours.

According to Shri Joshi, education should develop the head, the hand, and the heart. Education should have sound roots by way of character, industry and discipline and bear the fruit of prosperity for society.

The world trends, points out the author, indicate that education and production mutually support each other. In India today things are different and need to be corrected.—Ed.

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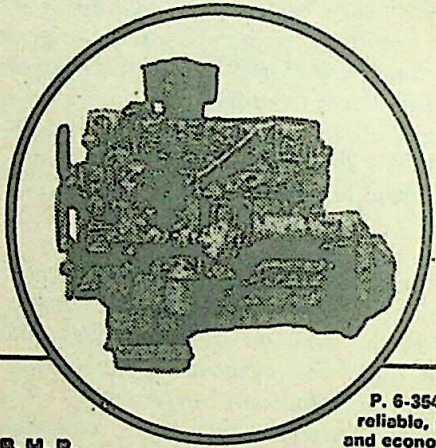

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Comprehensive Education in Britain

A significant feature of the education system in Britain seems to be that it is a comprehensive type, serving equally well different classes of students with social, economic and academic disparities.

In fact the socialising trends on these lines have evolved during the last 30-40 years (see Plate I).

In earlier days Britain had a vast empire covering large areas in distant lands. This demanded a large quantum of administrative talent and persons with strategic wisdom and other qualities. A large force of civil services was needed. This was largely drawn from the so-called 'Public Schools' which only the privileged could afford.

In the second world war Britain was victorious but exhausted. Instead of continuing to rule over people of rapidly increasing political consciousness, Britain offered them independence. Britain was demoted in leadership, yet her feeling of guardianship continued.

Since then Britain has been running a handicap race aspiring to regain its lost leadership. She has to make up in industrial production, stabilise her economy, catch up in the technological progress and has to win over labour dissatisfaction. Britain is making a vehement effort to overcome the situation, and this effort to a great extent moulds the modern trends in British education.

Education up to the age of 16 is compulsory in Britain as in most of the developed countries. In universalizing education and in imparting it to everybody irrespective of one's aptitude, ability and social environment, there are several inevitable difficulties, and these are met with by adopting a highly flexible attitude in several ways. School education gives wide option to students in the selection of subjects including several languages, mathematics, science, economics, sociology, philosophy, book-keeping, typing, engineering, agriculture, industrial skills, handicrafts, fine arts, physical education, military training, etc. (see Plate III). Latitude is also offered in changing the subjects either for ascertaining one's suitability for it or for achieving versatility. Admission regulations are never so rigid and deficiencies, if any, are allowed to be made good *en route*. Remedial measures are respected and facilities for such measures are liberally offered. Conduct of examination is carried out on widely differing patterns for different categories of students.

Secondary education is imparted mostly at grammar schools, modern schools and comprehen-

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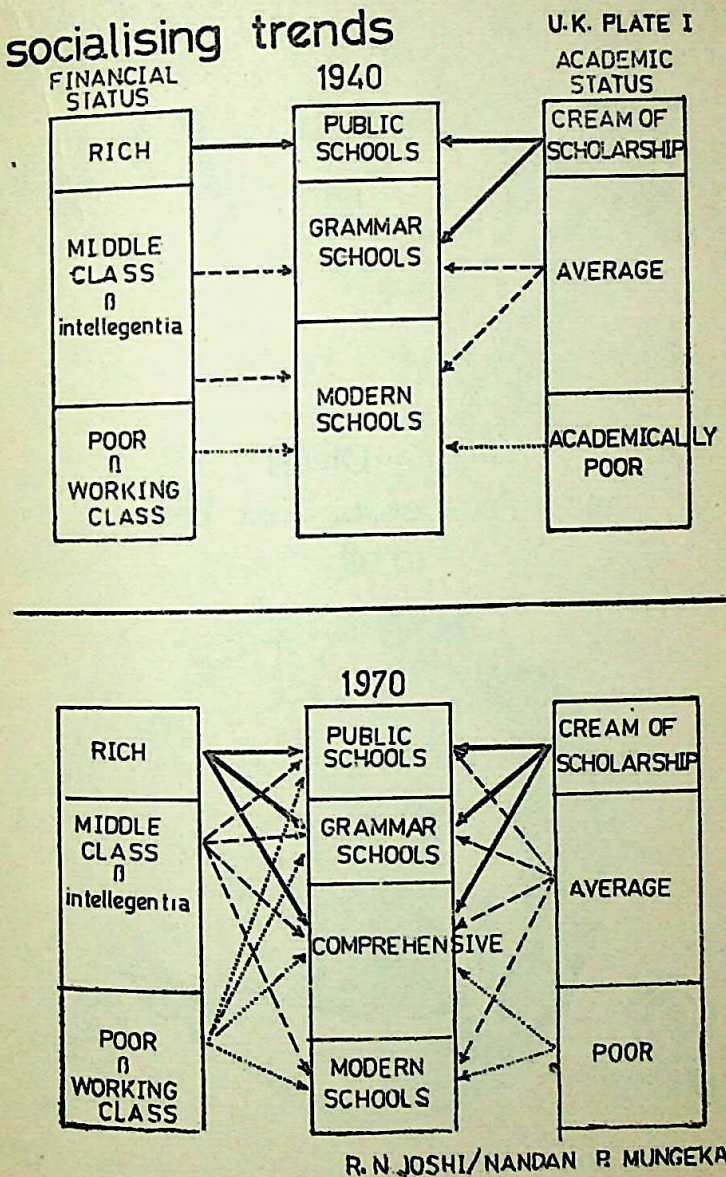
Education in Britain



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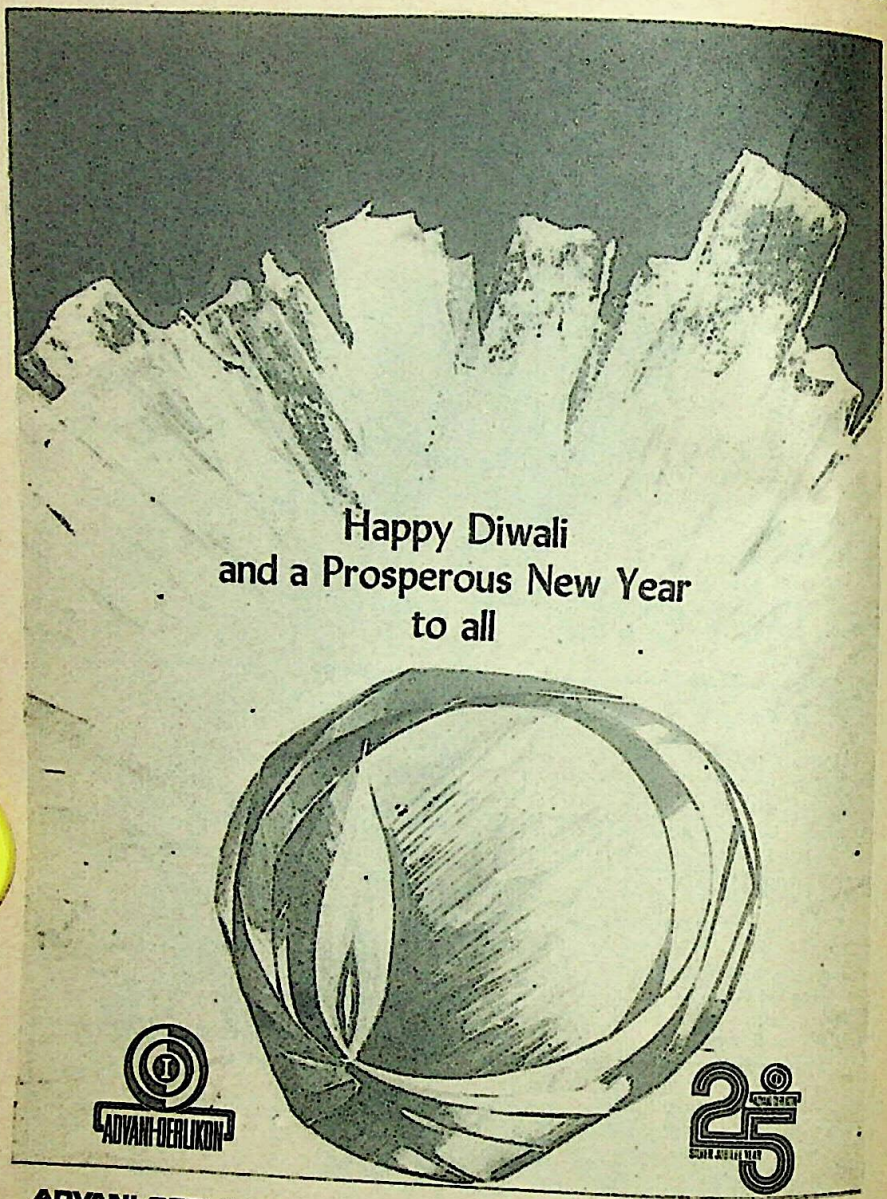

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sive schools. By far the largest number of students attend the modern schools. In 1967, 3,494 modern schools employing over 71,000 teachers enrolled over 1,500,000 students. Forty per cent of teachers at these schools are graduates. The students in these schools are poor in respect of academic studies with the result that there are many drop-outs. Schools generally offer some subjects of vocational utility in addition to the subject forming the basic curriculum.

Academically more important are the grammar schools. In 1967, 1236 grammar schools employing 40,000 teachers enrolled 694,898 students. Seventy-four per cent of the teachers are graduates. The wide choice of subjects offered is already indicated. Some 500,000 students were learning in 507 comprehensive schools in 1967 employing 21,000 teachers, out of whom 40 per cent were graduates. By 1970 there were 1145 comprehensive schools with 937,000 students and 53,000 teachers.

While most of the students attending the modern schools would in future constitute the group of workers in mills, factories, industries, shops, offices, farms, etc., a large number of students at the grammar schools are likely to go through the academic career in flying colours and would be working subsequently in senior positions. It was felt that it would be in mutual interest and in the interest of the community at large to combine the training at the modern schools and the grammar schools under one shelter.

It was broadly wth this philosophy that the Labour Government in 1964 introduced the comprehensive school. The growth of comprehensive schools in recent years indicates the acceptance of such schools by the public. In addition to these the Public Schools have played an important part in the British society. They are renowned for maintaining high standard of instruction and environment and have produced some of the outstanding personalities in the society, many a man of letters, many an able administrator. There is a heavy rush for entry to Public Schools which generally conduct their own entrance examination. Once an institution which was essentially aristocratic in character is now changing its look and its doors are now at least partly opened to the commoner.

An important and prestigious examination at the end of the secondary schools is the G.C.E., General Certificate Examination. It is conducted at two levels, the O level (Ordinary) generally at the age of 16, and the A level (Advanced) two years later. The syllabuses and standards of O level examination are generally comparable with those of S.S.C. (Standard X) examination of Maharashtra, and the A level with

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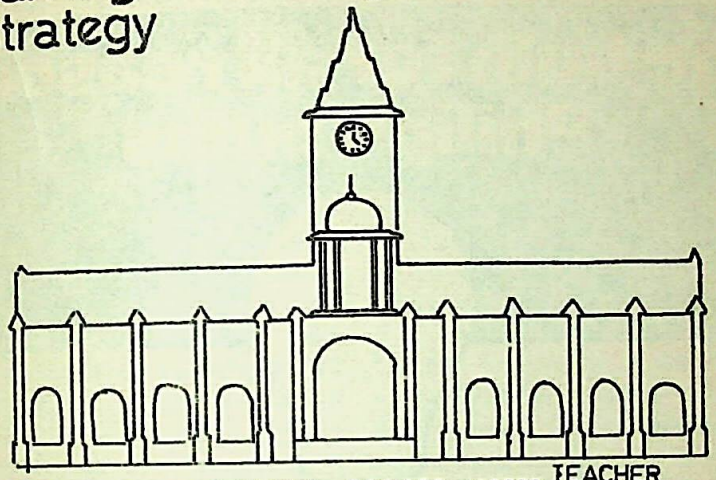
earning & learning strategy

U.K. PLATE II



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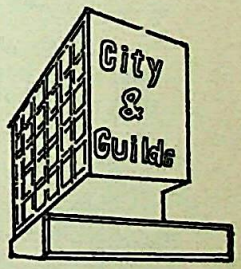

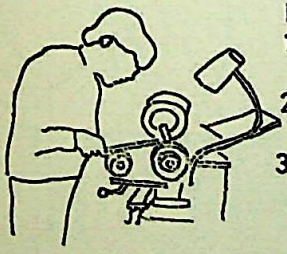

principal benefits

1 effective learning (motivated)

2 no problem of educated unemployed

3 improves production

R.N.JOSHI./NANDAN P. MUNGEKAR.

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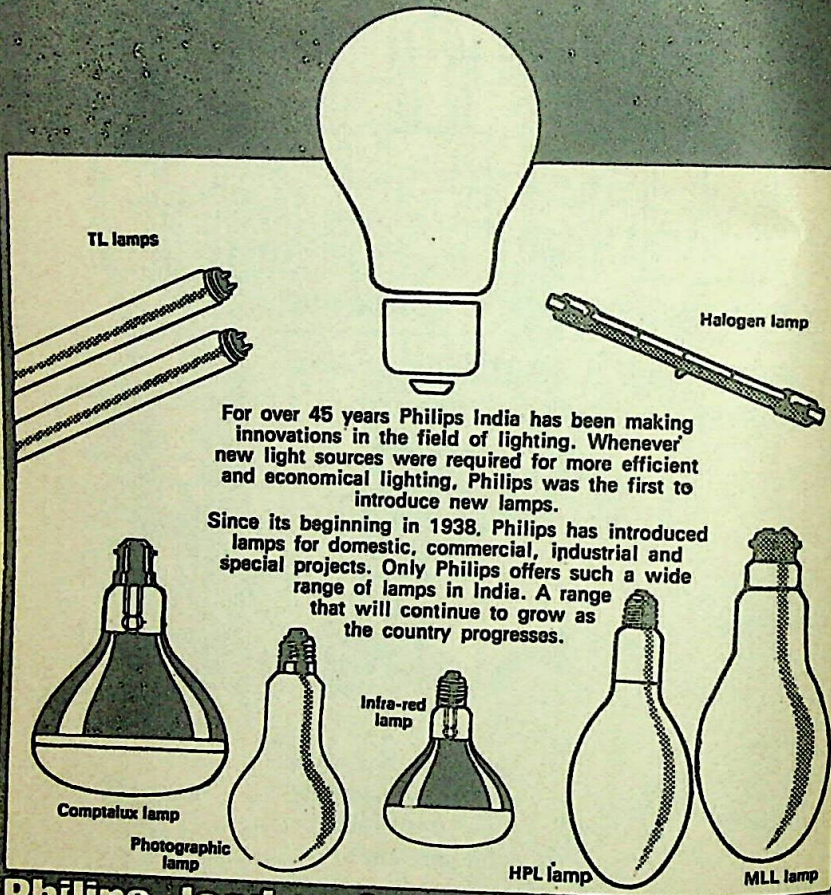
Philips bulbs



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Intermediate of Bombay University. There are no specific groups of subjects from which to choose. The G.C.E. Certificate just records the success of candidates subject-wise, whether there are nine of these or one, and the merit of performance therein. This often helps a candidate in respect of employment, or for instance, one with good performance in English and shorthand-typing would easily get a job even if he could not pass in mathematics. Students may appear for different subjects at different times. They are also free to appear in a subject directly at A level without obtaining a pass at O level in that subject. Even if a student fails in a subject at A level but if his performance is not too bad, the Board of Examinations may grant him O level in that subject. The minimum basic requirement for eligibility for admission to Universities is generally prescribed as 5 or 6 passes in O level and 2 passes at A level.

Another examination known as C.S.E. (Certificate of Secondary Education) has been introduced since 1965. These examinations are conducted by Regional Boards mostly consisting of school teachers. Results are given subject-wise mentioning the grade secured in each. Grades 1 to 5 denote successively diminishing merit, and if the student fails to reach grade 5 he is classed as ungraded. Grade 1 of C.S.E. almost equals a pass at G.C.E. O level.

Out of 520,000 students who offered at the C.S.E. in the summer of 1966, 94 per cent got grade 5. The examination is suited for students without much of academic standard who however form a fairly large section of modern secondary schools under the compulsory education scheme.

Though education up to the age of 16 is compulsory for all, it is hardly 5 per cent of the students who enter the university. Out of 217,625 full-timers at the university, 175,300 are studying for their first degree. Out of a total of 47 universities in Britain, universities of London, Cambridge and Oxford account for almost two-thirds of the total strength of university students. In addition some 125,000 students are studying in colleges of education. As many as 90% of the students leave full-time education after the age of compulsion. All the same, many of them continue to learn while they earn (see Plate III) under the scheme of Further Education and can still aspire to rise to higher levels of learning in different fields through these channels.

Further Education can be said to be the kingpin of the system of British education. It is that method of tertiary education which offers facilities for all those who are willing and able to take benefit from such facilities. Further Education can help a person in upgrading his job or in seeking

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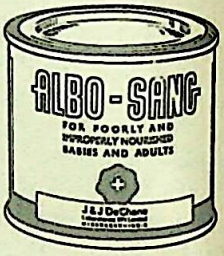

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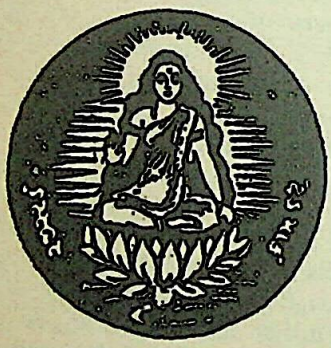

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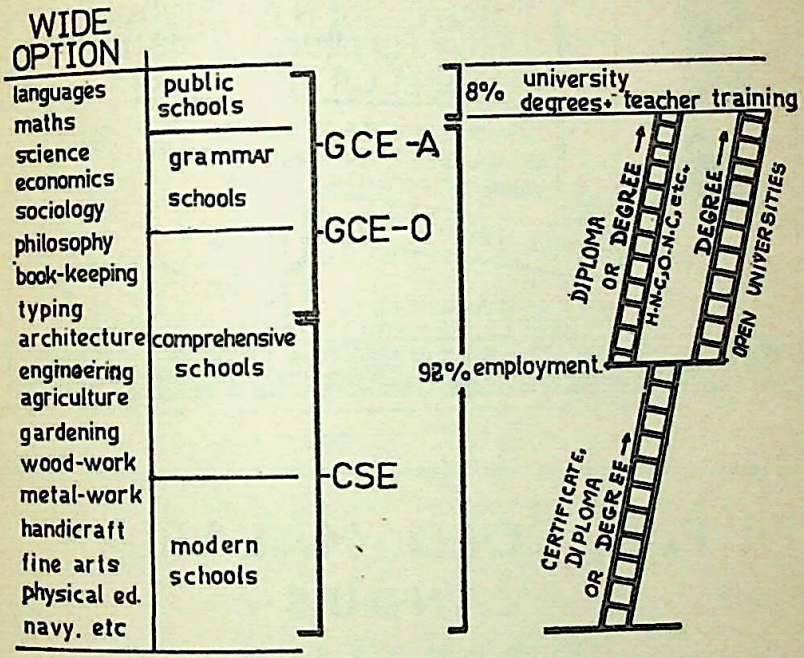
education
flexible, not rigid

UK PLATE III



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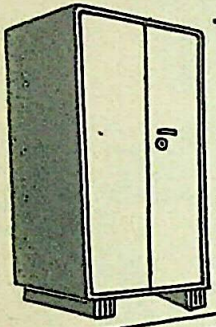

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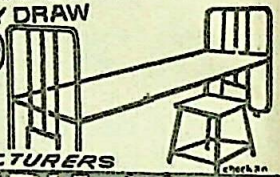

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alternative or leisure occupations or get training related to recreational activities or cultural development. Naturally, Further Education covers a field of great diversity of professional as well as non-professional courses. There are no age limits and there is no insistence on basic qualifications as deficiencies are made good *en route*. Courses connected with local industry and commerce are encouraged and benefit of local industry is taken in administering the courses. The courses provide a ready incentive for the people to improve their prospects and also improve the operative efficiency of the industry. Further Education has many advantages to its credit (Plate II).

It is only the students who are keen on learning take to it and not under parental or social pressure. Such motivated education is found to be very effective. Often persons working in industry or commerce take courses in some related field. Their education becomes one of the sandwich type as the learning at the courses is backed by experience in employment. The learner is already employed and the system does not lead to the problem of educated unemployed. There is no problem arising out of the possible disparity of the manpower requirement in any branch estimated by the planners and the actual employment potential.

Enrolment in Further Education in 1968-69 was 3,462,300 being more than ten times the numbers studying at the universities and colleges of education put together. Out of these, as many as 2,378,000 attend evening courses. Further Education is highly subsidised and the quality of training is maintained. As many as 40% of the school leavers between the age of 16-20 avail of Further Education.

Apart from universities, there are about 700 institutions giving instruction in Further Education. Out of these 500 are technical colleges, 152 colleges of arts, 5 agricultural colleges and 40 farm institutions. A technical college is distinct from a technical university in that the former is not meant to impart knowledge for its own sake and the instruction is practical in character for achieving professional and vocational competence.

Out of these institutions 300 are local colleges mainly giving courses in different trades and crafts (see Plate IV) and for operatives and technicians leading to examinations conducted by City and Guilds Institute. Some students appeal for O.N.C. (Ordinary National Certificate) examination. There are 185 area colleges which in addition to the work done by local colleges do some advance work leading to H.N.C. (Higher National Certificate) which is considered equal to graduation. Some 25 regional colleges do even more advanced work in addition. Out

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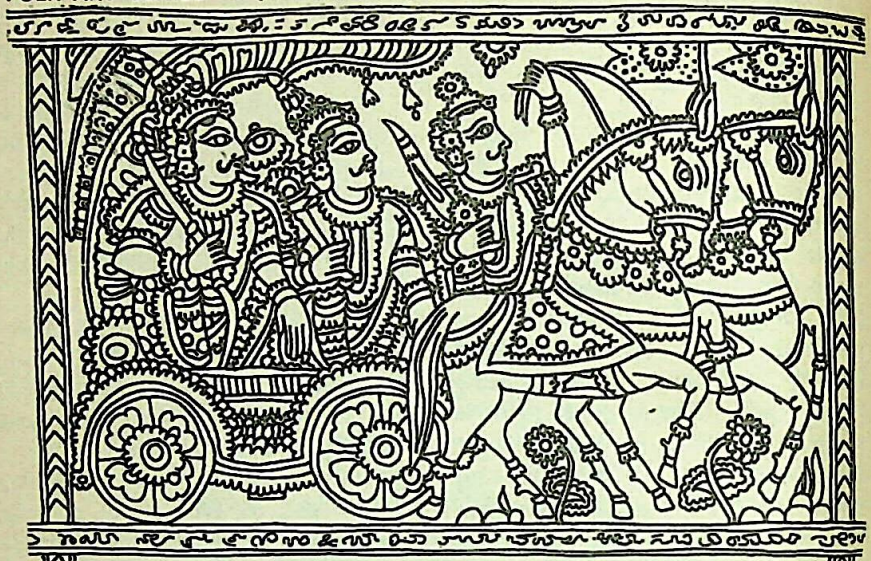
FOLK ART SERIES—1 (KALAMKARI)



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of the 60 leading colleges teaching technology, commerce and art, 30 have been selected to be of national character and have been designed as polytechnics. Polytechnics carry out some applied research and continue to do teaching work and maintain link with industry.

Local Education Authorities have been doing considerable work in the field of adult education. In the city of London there are 500 centres offering about 10,000 courses in which 270,000 adults participate taking courses from utilitarian point of view or by way of recreation. Classes are generally held in the evening, two evenings a week for each subject. Fees are nominal being £3/- per year.

There are large variety of courses including those for technicians, clerks, managers, as also in fine arts, household utilities, languages, and miscellaneous subjects such as yoga, etc. There are courses almost to suit everybody's needs and desires. Mass media like television, radio, museums and libraries have been amply assisting the non-formal education.

The system of apprenticeship which was in vogue in Britain for a long time has been systematised by the Industrial Training Act (1964) to ensure that enough workers of required skills are available at the right place at the right time efficiently to carry out the jobs to be done. (Plate IV). The training is organised by Industrial Training Boards, about 30 in number.

The recent trend in higher education to shake the ivory tower concept of University education is the establishment of Open University which provides courses leading to degrees and other qualifications by using a combination of television, radio, correspondence, tutorials, short residential courses and local audio visual facilities.

In the early stages, broadcasting can be more popularly used. But the emphasis would later shift to use of videotapes which would offer more flexibility in teaching programmes and suitability of timing for the student.

There are no specific educational requirements for joining the foundation course in the Open University. And students can take up for further courses only after clearing the foundation course. Graduation is by accumulation of credits.

As many as 200 study centres have been set up so that the centres are within reach of almost everybody. Personal contact of the student with an allocated counsellor and correspondence tutor is envisaged. In addition, study in a residential school for at least one week is obligatory.

The response to the Open University is satisfactory. As it is, several of the non-graduate teachers are drawing benefit from the scheme. Open Universities are

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2 adaptation to changing technologies

3 improves efficiency

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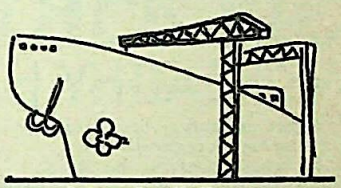

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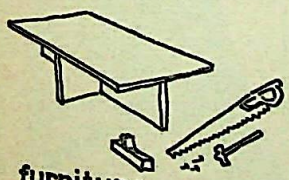

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meant more for adults who have missed higher education for any reason and gives them the second chance to have it.

It may be said that education system in Britain has undergone considerable improvement since the forties. Education has been socialised making it available to everybody irrespective of social, economic or academic inequalities. Importance of prestigious, aristocratic institutions has been dwindling. Education of earners and learners is patronised more than ever before. Industry's participation in the training of workers has been rapidly growing. Government contribution to expenditure on education is about £40 per head of population per year and is expected to yield a much higher return by way of fuller employment and more efficient production. The education pattern would give a helping hand to Britain to overcome her manifold problems. □□□

Life is always opening new and unexpected things to us. There is no monotony in living to him who walks even the quietest and tamest path with open and perspective eyes. The monotony of life, if life is monotonous to you, is in you, not in the world.

—Phillips Brooks

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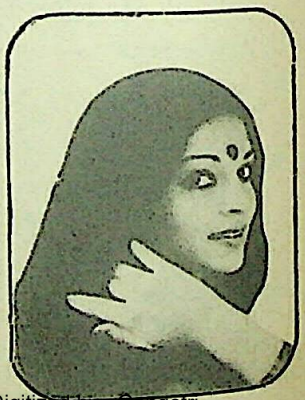

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(From the preface written by Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya to the author's book Sahyadrichya Paithyashin).

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VANDE MATARAM

V. S. SUKHTHANKAR

Those corpses of young men
Those martyrs that hang from the gibbets—
those hearts pierc'd by the gray lead,
Cold and motionless as they seem, live elsewhere
with unslaughter'd vitality!

—Walt Whitman

IT was a Sunday. I had at last completed the long overdue coconut gathering on our small ancestral estate in the village of Kundai. It was sunset when I hastened towards the river to return to Panjim.

I found Vyanku, the boatman, awaiting me at the bank, openly vexed that I had not reached as promised, before ebb-tide.

Silently I got into the boat. No sooner had the boatman set off, than I suddenly remembered that I had left undone something very important. "Wait a moment, Vyanku," I shouted, "please, take the boat back to the bank."

Vyanku now was annoyed beyond measure. In his wrath to emphasize the importance of punctuality in the science of navigation, he started narrating the calamities that had often been his lot in the past, due to the unpunctual habits of passengers like me.

I was insistent and explained to him, how urgent it was that he should take me back.

He yielded, but not without lamenting a Fate that was always bringing him thoughtless, tardy passengers like me!

I got out and hurried to the house of Haribaba, particularly to see his daughter-in-law Shevanti.

I wondered, how this customary visit escaped me, but was thankful, I had remembered it in time. Shevanti was the daughter of my neighbour Lakhubhau in Panjim. She loved me more than she could have loved her very own uncle. For I had known and petted her from the cradle. My visits to her in this village are, therefore, heartily welcomed.

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When I arrived, I found Shevanti's mother-in-law seated outside in the verandah, making lamp-wicks for the family shrine. After an exchange of greetings and on my enquiring about Shevanti, she directed me upstairs where Shevanti who was indisposed and her baby were both resting. When I reached the drawing room which was next-door to Shevanti's room upstairs, I was taken aback by the sound of soft singing. As the song continued, I could recognise Shevanti's voice and the words of our great national song, Vande Mataram. Over and over again she crooned, "Vande Mataram—Sujalam—Suphalam..."

Strange that Shevanti should *sing*, being both brought up and married in old-fashioned orthodox homes. With what deep emotion she sang! How did this happen to Shevanti who grew up illiterate and untutored? I decided to find from her. I sat enthralled listening to her. Then a veil was suddenly lifted. Memories of the past flashed through my mind, one by one—indelible memories!

It was in the year 1911, but how vividly I remember it! I had just returned after a long, weary journey by bullock cart and boat. My thoughts turned to little Shevanti.

Shevanti and I were next-door neighbours. She was only six, but what delightful company! A few yards only separated our homes. My study faced her house. In the empty room across the narrow gap Shevanti had her toys and used to play. There with her younger brother Babu and other playmates from the neighbourhood she spent her happy hours. So it was that whenever I drew up my chair to my window, I could laugh and play with her without needing to make the little journey to her house. From the moment she saw me at the window, my help was in constant demand to meet some urgent problem. Such important matters as the adornment of her doll with its bridal sari or with the nose-ring or ear-ring—these I must attend to. Carefully she would throw the doll into my outstretched hands. While getting ready by decorating herself for the exalted role of doll-bride's mother, she sought approval in my eyes rather than the mirror in her hand. When little Babu provoked a nursery crisis by some such gross impropriety as clamouring for the sacred wedding feast before the right time, Shevanti would appeal to me to bring the little rebel to terms. And I always felt, I was amply rewarded for my small services by her happy chatter, merry laughter and sweet wilfulness.

That evening I went to my study and drew up my chair up to the window, as usual. I lay back and though I called Shevanti several times there was no reply. It was usual for Shevanti at this hour to be playing either with her dolls or hide-and-seek with her little friends. Curious to know what

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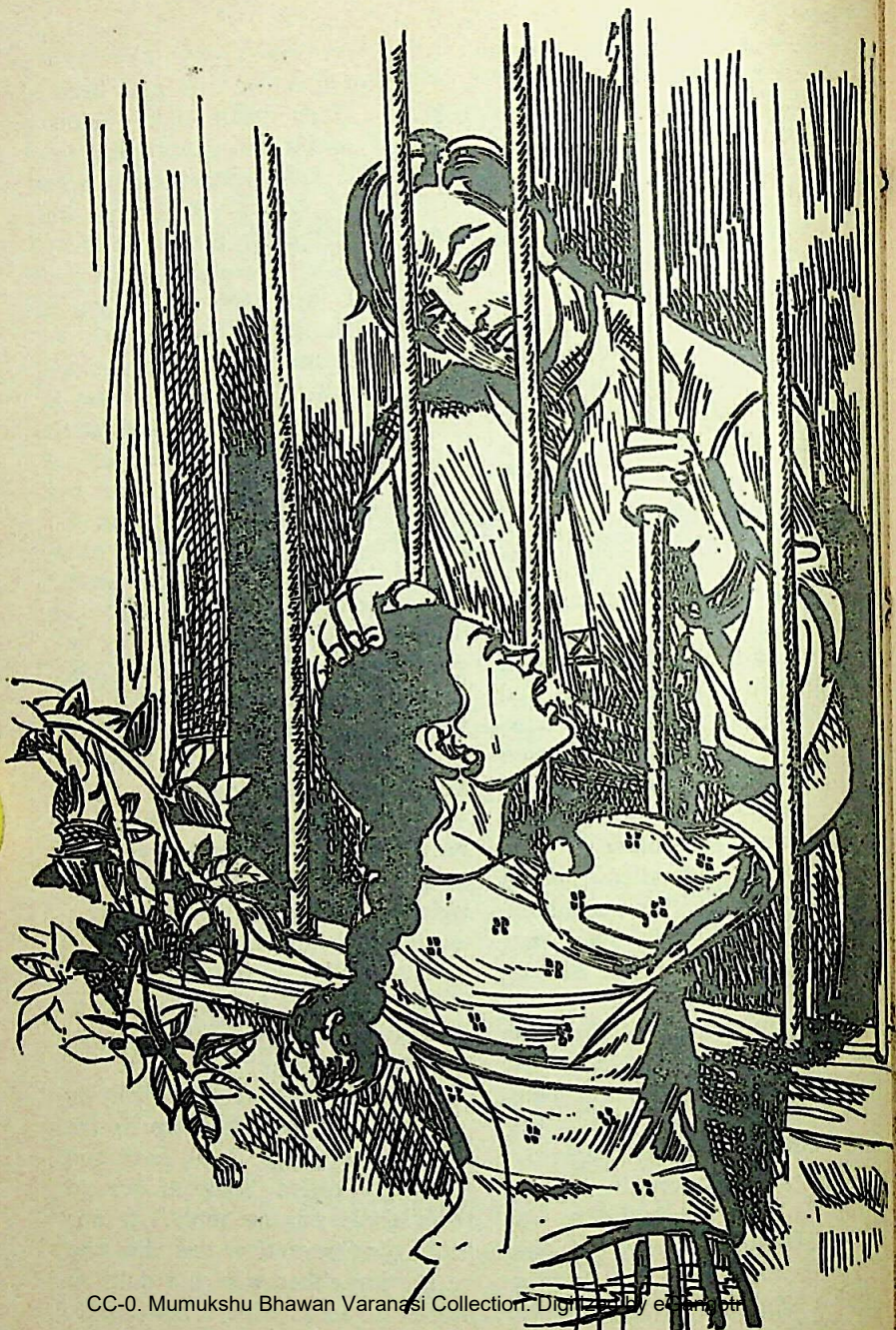

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had happened, I peeped through the window. What was my surprise to see that a complete change had taken place in Shevanti's room! Trunks and beddings had replaced Shevanti's dolls and toys. Two young men, not yet twenty, were seated on a mat. They were in Bengali attire, obviously strangers. The one was tuning a dilruba while Shevanti rested close to him, watching him with absorbed delight! Her little brother Babu perched himself on the other young man's knees fiddling with his shirt buttons. After the dilruba was tuned, the player began to play the popular tune of the Bengali song 'Amar Desh'. Shevanti who now realized that the younger one was about to sing, slowly moved away and quietly beckoned to her brother to come and sit beside her. The singer then broke into song to the accompaniment of the dilruba. Shevanti listened with shining contentment. When the song ended, the singer who spoke a mixture of Bengali, Hindi and Marathi, asked what she thought of the song. Her only reply was to ask shyly for a second song. The young men were only too happy to please her and the music began again—"Vande... Mataram..."

It would have been clear to any one that this song was especially sweet to them. Each word, each note was so moving in its tenderness that the hearer, even though his mind might not understand its meaning, must be stirred to the depths of his heart. The former song had moved Shevanti to ecstatic joy; as she listened to this second one, her emotion grew even more intense until it melted into a rapture! Her eyes brimmed as she gazed at the singer's lips. After a while tears rolled down her cheeks. The player happening to see her face, lowered his dilruba and making a signal with his eyes, spoke a few words in Bengali to his friend who immediately stopped singing, and drying her eyes with a corner of his dhoti and taking her hand and little Babu's said, "Come, let us go to the hill for a walk."

Even after all four had gone out of the room, I still sat in my chair lost in wondering thought over what I had just seen. The ringing of the Angelus from the church nearby recalled me to my senses. As I rose to leave the window, I noticed that Shevanti's father had returned from his office and was mounting the steps of the house. I had been hoping to meet him. At once I burst out with my question—"Well, Lakhubhau, who are those two young fellows who have come to stay with you?"

"They are two Bengali students. I found them there, near the Fountain, four days ago. As they came up, they spoke to me in Hindustani, 'we have come on sight-seeing in Bombay Presidency. We find this town unusually beautiful. We mean to stay here for a few

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weeks. Could you kindly help us to find a room which we could rent? If you could, we should be most grateful.' ...I wondered how I could find a room to suit them. You know, how few houses there are in the town nowadays, with rooms to spare. At last, seeing them to be all right, I suggested that they need not hire a room for a short time, but could come to us as we have an empty room. They agreed and are using this room here. They are good fellows."

My curiosity was satisfied by this explanation and I went into the inner hall.

Next day while writing in my room, the sound of laughter and merry talk came to me from Shevanti's room. After my writing was finished, I got up, went to the window and glanced across. I saw Shevanti sitting on a mat between the two young men. She was pointing to various articles and naming each one in Konkani, the language of Goa. Thus by direct method she was instructing her new friends in her own language. They in their turn, from time to time made stumbling attempts at high flights of oratory in such language as had been acquired in a few minutes' tuition. When their small instructress pointed out with peremptory delight, their ridiculous failures in pronunciation and grammar, all three dissolved in uproarious laughter.

I watched for a while and growing impatient, I called out to Shevanti. Shevanti who had not known that I was back, turned eagerly to me and shouted with joy: "Oh Uncle, when did you get back? How I missed you! Do you know we have guests? They say they come from a village 'Benghal'. It is very far away, farther than Margao, it seems. No, even farther than Bombay. The other day father brought them here." "He," pointing to the singer, is uncle Suresh and this is uncle Beeresh. Uncle Suresh sings so wonderfully. Uncle Beeresh plays on dilruba. How beautifully he plays! They are going to teach me, too, to sing and play. Isn't that lovely?... The only pity is that they cannot speak our language! ... and what a funny thing *their* language is! *Bangla* they call it. *Bhaalo-taalo. maatshya-caatsya, roshoogulla-foshoogulla,* like that they lisp, just like babies in cradle. When I hear them speak such *Bangla* of theirs, dear me, it simply makes my tummy ache with laughter! You know, uncle, they are going to stay with us *for ever and ever!*"

Thus she poured out into the ear of her old friend, the glad news of the making of new friends, not taking a single pause for breath in her narration. As she spoke, the two young men regarded her with looks of amused affection. When she had finished, I was about to draw her out still further, but a call from her father interrupted us and she disappeared inside.

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It was time for my morning worship. Therefore after a word or two out of politeness to the two young men to whom I had just been introduced, I went inside for my bath.

After this, as I sat in my room, I could hear every day, the sound of music or song or jesting conversation in Shevanti's room. The cheerful atmosphere created there was so enlivening to me that I took care to do nothing to disturb it, often not even betraying to Shevanti, my presence in my room. I opened a chink between the shutters of the window, so that I could enjoy their fun unperceived and by this means derived more pleasure than if I had simply had her to myself.

A fortnight passed. One afternoon I sat in my room reading. As the summer heat was unbearable, I went to the window for breath of air and peeped into Shevanti's room. There was no sound of laughter. All was quiet. I peeped in further and saw Beeresh cooking something on a stove and Suresh lying in bed obviously a victim of the fever epidemic in town. Shevanti sat by him looking very troubled and sad. Suresh noticed this. Assuming cheerful air, he said, "What's the matter with you, little Shevanti? Why are you so quiet today?"

Shevanti was clever enough to understand that this show of cheerfulness was put on. She did not answer. After a while she seemed to have decided to ask him a question. Drawing a little nearer to him, she softly said, "Uncle Suresh, are you in very great pain? I know when we have fever we get headache and our eyes ache, too, and we feel like crying. Once I had high fever, but my mother opened her box of medicines and made a paste of some kind of root and put it on my forehead. She placed a cloth soaked in water on my head; fomented my hands, feet and back and then my fever left me. May I ask my mother to come and make your fever go? But I am afraid, she is too shy to come before men. Where is your mother, Uncle?"

Nothing could have moved Suresh more than the innocent affection and sweet sympathy of that little heart. He was at a loss what to reply. At last after a little thought, he gently took her hands in his and said in a voice softened with feeling, "Shevanti dear, I shall tell you a secret of ours. So far we have not told it to anyone in this town. Mind well, you must not tell it to any one else. We have a Goddess, Beeresh and I. The song 'Vande Mataram' that we often sing, is a song of that Goddess. It is a prayer to her, a holy Mantra! However ill we are or in whatever trouble we are, if we call to her mighty spirit by chanting this Mantra with love, we at once get over our pain or sadness. You know, it is a magic Mantra. And

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therefore although I have an attack of fever today, my forehead and eyes are not aching, nor do I feel like crying, as you did, when you had fever. Listen, I shall sing that song of our Goddess and I shall feel perfectly well.

He sang 'Vande Mataram' ...

When Suresh finished singing the gloom was gone from Shevanti's face. Beeresh now brought Suresh a hot drink. I lay back in my chair and resumed my reading.

A week passed. Bhadrapad was over. The month of Ashwin and with it the Navaratra began. The sacred village of Kavalem is known for its Navaratra celebrations. Shree Shanta Durga of this village was Lakhubhau's family deity. He had therefore decided to go there with his family during this festival and to spend a couple of days there in order to fulfil the long due vow that his family had made to the Goddess. On being invited by my good neighbour, I had consented to accompany the party there.

It was on the morning of Panchami that Lakhubhau reminded me to be ready to start with them at nine o'clock that night, as at that time it would be neap-tide, the best time for the boat to set out.

At the appointed hour when we were all ready to start, Shevanti to our surprise was not to be seen! Lakhubhau was annoyed. "That child has such a one-track mind! She must be still with our guests!" he muttered angrily, as he hurried to look for her. I went with him to perform my usual duty of shielding Shevanti from her father's rebukes. We found Shevanti, holding on to Beeresh and Suresh trying to persuade them both to join us. Shevanti would listen to none of their excuses and when both Lakhubhau and I also pressed them, they gave in. They quickly got ready. Beeresh took his dilruba with him and they joined the party accompanied by the victorious Shevanti.

In a few minutes we reached the river-side and seated ourselves in the boat. When the boat moved Lakhubhau and other members of his family lay down in the empty space under the boat roof. Beeresh and Suresh took their seats on the planks across the other end of the boat where, needless to say, Shevanti joined them. She urged me also to come there.

The boat bathed in the soft light of the fifth-night moon, was impelled gently by the rhythm of the oars dipping in time with lapping waves of the incoming tide. Below, in the shining water could be seen beautiful reflections of coconut palms which leaned over the river, swinging together arm-in-arm at the behest of the wind. Scores of cranes singing their song of rest on the candle trees that edged the river banks, flew away, at the sound of our oars, flock after flock, in a long line like a rivulet of milk flowing across the deep blue of the sky.

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It is no wonder that Suresh and Beeresh, as the boat glided forward, sat spell-bound, completely bewitched by the all-pervading harmony of that quiet, lovely evening. Seeing them silent, both Shevanti and I were also speechless. After we had spent an hour or so in complete silence, Beeresh's fingers began to move on the strings of his dilruba and a variety of subtle sound-patterns floated on the quiet atmosphere around. Suresh was quite carried away by the rapture of the music. Shevanti was overcome with joy. I too was swayed by it. The oarsmen ceased their boisterous chatter. Soon Suresh was inspired to and burst into song. He began with Shri Chaitanya's songs and went on to the *Bhajans* of Kabir and Mirabai. A couple of hours swiftly passed during which the minds of all listeners were so captured by this feast of music that we could have sat listening to it for the whole night and still remained unsatisfied. But with Kabir's 'Ram nam tu bhajale pyare' Suresh stopped and Beeresh kept aside his dilruba. Both were tired and could not continue their music any more. At this, after a brief while, Shevanti nestling close to Beeresh with a disappointed look fondly said, "Uncle, why is the song of the Goddess not sung today? Please tell Uncle Suresh to sing it!"

The musicians smiled. They knew Shevanti loved the song of the Goddess most. "I must obey your command, my little Queen!" Suresh said, playfully touching Shevanti's chin and renewed his singing—

"Mother, I bow to thee!
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams.
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving, Mother of night,
Mother free!
Glory of moonlight dreams,
Over thy branches and lordly streams,
Clad in thy blooming trees,
Mother, giver of ease,
Laughing low and sweet!
Mother, I kiss thy feet,
Speaker sweet and low!
Mother, to thee I bow...."

Suresh sang as he had never sung before. He had hardly finished singing the second stanza, when all of a sudden one of the boatmen sitting behind us shouted in a shrill voice, "Pandu, Bhiku, Narsu —look there! what's that?" The entire crew fixed their gaze on the curve of the river which our boat had left behind and broke into boisterous exclamations. Suresh now had to leave his song incomplete. This commotion brought Lakhubhau out.

We could, now, distinctly see the bright light of several lamps swiftly gliding towards us round the curve, a mile behind. We tried to guess what this unexpected sight could be. At last a sound could be distinctly heard which put

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BALAJEE

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a stop to our discussion. It was a sound of a steam-launch moving unusually fast. After a moment we could see it, though indistinctly, and all our doubts were cleared. But now we began to ask, what it meant? How was it that at this unusual hour a steam-launch could be seen, running on the river when according to the regulation, the launch could make only two trips, one up the river in the early morning and the other down the river early evening. Its trip at midnight was unheard of!

In a quarter of an hour the steam-launch overtook us. Our helmsman steered our craft from the middle of the river a little towards the bank, to make way for it. The moment he did so, somebody from the launch shouted threateningly at him, to stop his boat where it was. The oarsmen at once took up their oars. We were all left wondering!

The launch came nearer and touched our boat. Half a dozen men came aboard. One of them, who had a lantern in his hand, now set out to scrutinize each one of us. I could at once recognise him. He was T. Subbarau, a representative of some Swadeshi Insurance Company who had arrived in Panjim and opened a branch office of his Company, just a fortnight back. Being an Insurance Agent, he had already paid visits to and made acquaintance with a number of people in the town. Twice he had called on Lakhubhau and me and left with us a prospectus of his Insurance Company. In addition to this, just a week before, he had delivered a public lecture on 'Swadeshi' at the meeting held in the temple of Shree Mahalaxmi. At the sight of him, I felt considerably relieved, in this strange situation, and I impatiently stepped forward. But when I was about to ask him what this strange fuss meant, Subbarau came to Beeresh and Sutesh and seeing their faces in the light of his lantern, shouted, "It is these scoundrels that are wanted. Handcuff them!"

The next moment three or four constables from the British Police came forward to obey him and dragging Beeresh and Suresh roughly, handed them over to the custody of a Portuguese Sergeant and two armed policemen from the Goa Police who were also of that party.

How unexpectedly this calamity befell our guests! They were evidently prepared for it and faced their captors with quiet courage.

As for Lakhubhau and me, we were both extremely shaken. Lakhubhau who showed some presence of mind, composed himself in time and snapped angrily at Subbarau, "Have you no sense of shame whatsoever, Mr. Subbarau, to behave like this? What have these gentlemen done to your Insurance Company?"

"Now, now, do not lose your

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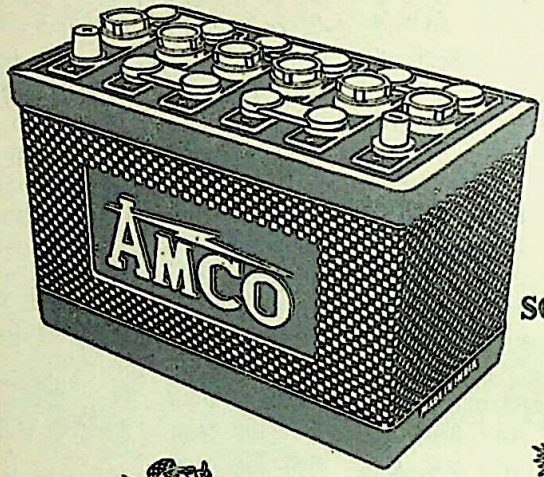

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temper: I have nothing to do with that Insurance Company which again has nothing to do with this whole affair. What these Bengalis have done and against whom, will soon be known to you. Till then, if you are impatient, just look at this"—with these words and with a knavish smile, Subbarau took from his pocket a card and held it before Lakhubhau in the light of the lantern. On this card were his real name and his designation as a British C.I.D. Inspector. Simultaneously the Portuguese Sergeant who was standing nearby, said to Lakhubhau in stilted Portuguese—"Be prudent, Senhor, and do not hold a brief for such bombmakers and anarchists as these two Bengalis!"

Lakhubhau and I who used to do enough newspaper reading, did not need to be told what ghastly history there was behind these words—'British C.I.D.'—'Anarchists'—'Bombs'! All Lakhubhau's courage to plead for the Bengalis at once died down! I was thinking to aid Lakhubhau in his spirited stand on behalf of our young guests, but now I dropped the idea altogether!

Within the short period of a few weeks the two Bengalis had so won our hearts by their gentle, lovable nature that our feeling for them could not be affected by what had happened. Our hearts went out to them in love and sympathy!

When they were about to leave the boat and get into the launch, Beeresh and Suresh cast a friendly glance at us and bade us *au revoir* saying huskily—"Namaste"! Then they turned to Shevanti. But what words now could they find to take leave of this little friend of theirs, this little heart?

"Shevanti!" they called her! That was all! No more words came from their lips, but this one word spoke volumes. They could not help fixing their gaze on Shevanti's face—a face that fear had turned pale and on which tears were rolling down. It pained them greatly to see her grief, but they controlled their own feelings and stepped forwards towards the launch. This parting from her friends made Shevanti cry aloud. Suddenly she grew courageous and rushing towards Suresh clasped him fast and poured out her heart in piteous sobs—"Uncle Suresh, why have these people caught you? Where are they taking you? They might beat you! Who then will save you? Look, Uncle, they are carrying guns with sharp swords in them!"

Who could not read mirrored in these simple words the child's deep anguish? Suresh and Beeresh, now could not leave her without saying something to console her. They turned back. Suresh, putting on a carefree, composed air gently drew her near, bent down and said in a low voice, "You silly little goose! Have we not told you the secret of our Goddess? Why should you be frightened and

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weep like this? Don't you know that this Goddess of ours is all-powerful and if she wills, she can break the guns and swords of these people into pieces in the twinkling of an eye? She can make us strong enough to break these iron cuffs and free ourselves. Not only that, she can make these armed sepoys even fall at our feet. Yes, I could not sing the whole Mantra just now, but I will finish it for you, dear, before I leave"—And now in his glorious voice, but in a subdued tone, he sang—

"Mother, I bow to thee.
Holder of multitudinous strength
I bow to her who saves
To her who drives from her
the armies of her foe-men,
The mother!"

Though Suresh sang low, he could be heard by everybody. Lakhubhau and I were amazed to see Suresh's self-control. As for the C.I.D. Inspector, the Sergeant and the constables, they thought him a little off his head. One of the constobles now angrily pushed Suresh forward. By this time Suresh had completed his couplet and was content. Both the young men were then taken aboard the launch.

Lakhubhau and I could not see a way of helping our friends in their misfortune. Nevertheless, I decided to accompany them back to Panjim, hoping that once in town, I might find some way of serving our guests. With a great difficulty, therefore, I persuaded the Portuguese Police Sergeant to allow me to make the trip back with him.

The launch and the boat moved away from one another in opposite directions, but I could still hear Shevanti's heartbroken sobbing.

Four hours passed before our launch reached Panjim. The constables now examined the handcuffs of the Bengalis, adjusted the ropes on their arms, pulled them down from the launch and made them walk to the Police office under the strict watch of the Portuguese sepoys.

With a sad heart, I turned to go home. I spent that whole day interviewing the different authorities in the judicial and police departments whom I knew, seeking their help. Not one of them cared to listen to me. On the other hand, a few secrets regarding the international understanding between the British Government and Portuguese Government in India, were revealed to me, which, to my great disappointment, convinced me that nothing in the world could be done to save these two young men!

The sensational news that two Bengali bomb-makers had been caught by the detectives of the "Inglez" Government, was now on the lips of everyone and soon wild rumours began running about the town.

"Lakhubhau and his neighbour,

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too, are to be arrested, because they were helping the Bengalis to elude the C.I.D. and escape!"

"Police have discovered bombs hidden by the Bengalis in Lakhubhau's kitchen-garden!"

"Poor Lakhubhau, when he saw the Police party in the launch, he fainted and fell into the river but the Portuguese Sergeant, gulping down the bottle of port he always carries in his pocket, jumped in after him and pulled our fat Lakhubhau out in a trice, catching hold of his 'shendi!'"

Such rumours were exchanged and discussed at every street corner. However, one rumour was true that the Bengalis were to be kept in Panjim prison till the British C.I.D. received further orders from their Government.

Four days later, when Lakhubhau returned home from the holy place, the very first thing he did was to come to me and enquire about our friends. "How terrible!" he said, when he heard my news. "Now, there is some matter, in which only you can help. For the last four days, Shevanti has been weeping and insisting on being taken to see her friends. So, now it is up to you to take this crazy child to them. That prison officer Captain Pereira is a good man. Besides, you know him personally. If you explain the whole matter to him, he might allow her to go and speak to them."

I had enough experience to know how difficult it would be for anyone to meet Beeresh and Suresh in their prison. Though my repeated attempts to see them, during the last four days, had met with failure, I decided to try once again, and with Shevanti in my company went to the Police Station.

Whenever I had been there before, I had seen British Constables in addition to the Portuguese Police, keeping watch at the gate of the prison. But luckily today no British Constables were on guard but only the Portuguese police. This change gave me some hope, and explaining to the Captain the deep attachment Shevanti had for the prisoners, I requested him to allow her to meet her friends, just once. He was touched, but said regretfully, "I'm sorry, it is quite impossible today. Those British Officers from Bombay are engaged in extorting statements from these two young men and for that purpose they have taken the two prisoners from their usual cells to the more solitary quarters, yonder; those quarters are so far from here, that even if a man shrieked there, he could not be heard here."

While Captain was speaking we heard the sound of the door of one of the nearby cells open. The Captain said, "Probably the two prisoners are being brought back to their cells." He hastened there and hurrying back said, "The British Officers have sent back one of the two. They must have

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finished taking his statement. You are lucky. Your desire to see at least one of the two prisoners can now be fulfilled. While those British Officers are busy elsewhere with the other prisoner, I do not mind if you take this child to the cell and let her meet the one who is there."

I immediately tried to make my way to the cell with Shevanti when the Captain stopped me. "Mind," he said, "you must not go beyond the railing, that is at some distance from the cell. Even from outside the railing the child will be able to have a sight of him through the bars of the cell window. I warn you again, you must not go near the prisoner, nor speak to him. For, for me this is a grave matter —a matter for which I might lose the confidence I enjoy of His Excellency the Governor."

Wanting to lose no time, I rushed with Shevanti to the inner part of the jail and according to the Captain's instructions, we stood outside the railing at some distance from the cell. The prisoner who had just been brought to the cell was Suresh. When he saw me, he came to the window and stood there with his hands on the bars. At the sight of Shevanti, he attempted to put on a cheerful smile but could not. It is no exaggeration if I say, his face was the face of a corpse! He was extremely pale, with sunken cheeks and eyes red and swollen. This cruel sight filled my heart with anguish. I knew the cause of this change. When I looked from his face to his hands, I could not believe my eyes. The fingers of both hands were bleeding and swollen to double their original size. The iron handcuffs were still round his wrists. His shirt and his dhoti were stained with blood.

A few days later, I learned that this ghastly condition was due to a torturing instrument with which his fingers were pressed. This was one of the tortures resorted to by the British Officers to force out of these two helpless victims certain information pertaining to political matters. I could not bear that sight any longer, and when I realized what effect it would have on little Shevanti, I decided to leave the spot at once. When I turned to go, to my great surprise and embarassment, Shevanti all of a sudden unlocked her hand from mine, crossed the railing and dashed off towards Suresh's cell. I called to her and even threatened her, but she did not notice me. Standing as if stuck to the window of Suresh's cell and putting her little hands through the iron bars, she caught hold of Suresh's shirt and fixing her streaming eyes on his face, sobbed piteously. Suresh lost his usual self-control and could not check his tears. In a trembling voice he said, "Shevanti dear, why should you have come here to see me like this? Go, go away. Look, there your Uncle is calling you back. Go away now.

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Be quick. If the Police see you here, they will get angry with you." But these words only made Shevanti's grief keener. Clasping him round she sobbed out pathetically, "Uncle, when will you come home? When will they let you go? Look, how your fingers are swollen and bleeding? How it must be hurting you? Come home, Uncle. Why do you not come?"

Suresh, now, succeeded in overcoming his feelings. He put on a serene expression and in a persuasive tone said to her, "These British sepoys will take Beeresh and me from here to Bengal tomorrow and leave us free there. We'll then write letters from there to you and that Uncle. After some time we shall even come back here to see you. Now, dear, you must leave this place and go home. Do not worry about my fingers. They do not hurt me. Have I not told you that when we chant our Goddess' Mantra we can bear anything! As soon as I begin singing that divine song, the pain in my fingers will vanish!"

Then he sang—

"Mother, I bow to thee
Thou art knowledge,
Thou art conduct
Thou our heart, thou our soul
For, thou art the life in our body
In the arm, thou art might,
O Mother!
In the heart, O Mother, thou art
love and faith
Mother, I bow to thee!"

Meanwhile I kept calling out Shevanti from a distance but in vain. At last I myself ran to the cell, loosened Shevanti's arms from Suresh's and hurried out dragging her with me. As I separated her from him Suresh in a fit of grief, bent and pressed, through the bars, a kiss on Shevanti's forehead and thus having bidden her a last goodbye, I heard his broken voice, choked with emotion, stammer, "God bless you, darling! How can we ever repay your sweet love? May God repay it!"

I came out to the prison gate, thanked the Captain and left with Shevanti. All the way I had to wipe away her tears.

In a day or two news was afloat in the town that the British party had left Goa for Bombay with two Bengali anarchists in their custody.

For many days after this event, Shevanti kept looking for a letter from her dear Uncles. Almost every time the postman came and handed a letter to me, she would run to me and eagerly ask, "Is it from 'Benghal', from Uncle Suresh?"

A month passed after this and one morning I was standing in the verandah glancing over the newspaper 'Kalgati' that the postman had just brought me, when as usual, Shevanti came running from her house and asked the inevitable question, "Is this a letter from Uncle Suresh?" Just then my eyes

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fell on the following news item printed in bold type—

"Two Bengali youths arrested in Goa, sentenced to transportation for life and sent to Andamans!"

As my mind was absorbed in reading this news, absentmindedly I had left Shevanti's question unanswered. The very fact that she did not get the usual negative reply today, gave her some hope, and clutching at my arm, she went on repeating the same question with all the more impatience. At last, to quiet her while I was reading, I said unguardedly, "Yes." Overjoyed with this reply she asked again, "Where are they now?" In the same absentminded state I replied, "In the Andamans!"

"Where is this village Andamans? Why have they gone there? When are they coming here?" Many more such questions followed. But as some meaningless monosyllable or other was all that I said to her in reply, as I was engrossed in reading the columnfull of details, her patience was exhausted and off she ran to tell her family the news of her friends.

The next moment she acquainted each one of them with the happy news—"Uncle Suresh and Uncle Beeresh have sent a letter. They are in the village Andamans!"

* * *

I called out to her. At the sound of my voice she stopped singing and hastened out. My sudden visit was a pleasant surprise to her. I could see her blushing at the thought that I had heard her sing. After we had greeted each other, I could not help saying, "I could never have imagined that you had such a sweet voice and that you could sing so well. By the way, who taught you that song?" She blushed all the more and avoided replying by hurrying down-stairs to bring me some refreshment. But she did not realise how dogged my inquisitiveness would be, for on her return, as I helped myself to sweets, she had to submit to my renewed questioning and being assured that I would not joke or talk about her singing, she replied, "Do you not remember? Many years ago in my childhood there were two Bengali gentlemen staying in our house at Panjim, who were later on arrested by the British Police and taken to Bombay? This song about some Goddess of theirs, was their favourite. I heard them sing it so often, that I learned it by heart. I still remember a few couplets of it. Those two Bengalis used to say that this song was a 'Mantra' of their Goddess. And truly, Uncle, it must be a 'Mantra', for no doubt there is some divine power in it!"

Amazed at this belief of hers, I asked her, "What? you still believe that it is a 'Mantra' and do you understand the meaning of any of it?"

"No, I do not. But is there any need to understand a Mantra? Whether we know its meaning or not, a 'Mantra' is after all a Man-

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tra. It brings blessing. How many of us can know the meaning of the sacred Sanskrit 'mantras' that are chanted at thread ceremonies and weddings? But don't you agree that they bless the lives even of those who are ignorant of their meaning? As for this 'mantra' of the Goddess, I was an eye witness. Whenever those Bengalis sang it in suffering, they were relieved. You must remember... how could you forget?... When you took me to their prison how dreadfully one of them was suffering...but how bravely he bore it all! He could not have been more than eighteen and yet what courage! And it was this 'Mantra' that gave him such fortitude! I myself have the same experience of this 'Mantra', for whenever I am sad or in pain, I take refuge in it, and then, as if by magic, at once I get relief."

I said to myself, "When ignorance is bliss, why should I disturb it?"

After a pause, Shevanti went on. "I remember a lot more about those two who were staying with us. By the way, Uncle, what, do you think, became of them?"

I was still absorbed in analysing Shevanti's mind, and I replied half absent-mindedly—"They were sent to Kala Pani!" "What is this 'Kala Pani'? ('Black Water')" she asked again, in considerable surprise!

"It is exile. Just as the Portuguese Government here sends some

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arch-criminals to Mozambique in Africa, so the British Government sends such criminals to distant islands overseas, called 'Andamans'. That is 'Kala Pani'. Especially such criminals as these Bengalis were made out to be, are fated to die there chained to a 'chakki' (hand-mill) or breaking road-metal!"

Shevanti was silent for a while. Then with her eyes full of tears, she said, her voice quivering—"They were, indeed, great souls!" After a few moments, she added, as if to herself—"strange, how God allows such people to suffer so much!"

Just at this moment somebody shouted to me, at the top of his voice, over and over again, from down-stairs, "Visubaba, Visubaba."

It was Vyanku, the boatman. There was nothing now to be done, but to bid Shevanti a hurried goodbye and follow Vyanku to the river bank.

All the way Vyanku, the boatman, in his fury, swore at me for my unpardonable delay and quoted rules of ebb-tide and neap-tide, the eastward and westward directions of the winds, and all such other complicated doctrines pertaining to a boatman's lore to prove what a series of disasters he would now have to face till his boat reached Panjim—and all this due to my inconsiderateness!

If, as usual, I had offered to add four annas more to the fare already fixed upon, that would have been enough to give him courage to overcome all those unexpected perils and shut his mouth. But my mind being otherwise engrossed naturally, this simple thing did not occur to me.

In a few minutes we reached the river and seated ourselves in the boat. Vyanku quickly set sail. The wind was blowing strongly in a favourable direction. The boat cut through the current of the river with ease and sped on.

Vyanku sitting at the rudder began to sing a boatman's song in his harsh, highpitched voice, while the wind blowing through a hole in a corner of the sail whistled a shrill accompaniment. In spite of this deafening concert produced by the combined efforts of man and nature, rising above it persistently, I could still hear Shevanti singing that haunting melody—the Mantra of the Goddess—'Vande Mataram!'* □□□

* The quoted stanzas of "Vande Mataram" are from a translation by Shri Aurobindo of Bankimchandra Chatterjee's original in Sanskrit.

The decree has gone forth, the fiat of the Lord has gone forth—India must rise, the masses and the poor are to be made happy.

Swami Vivekananda

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Drawing richly from the treasure of his erudition, the author forcefully refutes the much-bandied-about notion that Indians are "other-worldly" in their outlook and asserts that, barring a few exceptions which are confined to a particular category of persons and which cannot therefore be generalised, the people of India have always had a very healthy outlook on life, the ideal being a harmonious balancing of Artha, Kama *and* Moksha, *with* Dharma *as the guiding principle.*—Ed.

Is Hindu Culture Other-Worldly?

DR. V. RAGHAVAN

WHILE some laud India as the mystic East, the land of the seers, the cradle of religion and philosophy, there are others who say it differently—that Indian thought is other-wordly, over-occupied with meditation, pessimistic, ascetic, inactive and barren of advancement in worldly branches of learning on which 'good life' on earth depends.

The Hindu is said to be an other-worldly being and his philosophy is said to teach the very undesirable doctrine of the illusoriness of the world. It is believed by many a student of Hindu culture that to the Hindu life was unreal, the world was naught, was an evil he must fly away from; that this doctrine and the theory of *Karma* had made the Hindu a pessimist who had no joy in life, no intention to live a 'good life', and enjoy the good things of this world; and that the Hindu was enchanted with the ideal of an ascetic, all-renouncing, empty life. Such a view of life, some critics go on to say, is hardly conducive to the development of a healthy theism and a scheme of ethical conduct.

As a matter of fact, Flint and MacNicol deny any genuine theism in Hindu philosophy and numberless are the writers who deplore the fact that the Advaitic conception of the world is incompatible with any scheme of ethical conduct. This criticism has been

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dinned into our ears, and through auto-suggestion and inferiority-complex, we have begun to think ourselves to be a race incompetent for life in this world.

During our struggle for Independence, there were not wanting clever and perverse Anglo-Indian journalists and writers who advanced this over-philosophical temperament and indifference to this world as an argument against our claims to self-government and freedom. Echoing, as it were, the opinion of such critics, an Indian wrote at that time in the *Hindusthan Review* that Hindu Philosophy needed to be rewritten if India had to live a life of dignity among the nations of the world! It was supposed by missionary writers and political propagandists at that time that it was only as a result of the discharge of the whiteman's burden through the two functionings of the ruler and the missionary that modern India was becoming active and learning how to enjoy life.

The basis of all these opinions is the insufficient understanding of the Hindu attitude, history and literature. The real cause of the spread of this half-truth is to be found in the history of European study of Indian literature, which was for a long time, and even now is, predominantly interested in the religious and philosophical works, the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the books of Buddhism and Jainism, for purposes of Comparative Philology and Comparative Religion. To generalise from a part of a nation's literature is not correct. It is one thing to pay due tribute to the eminence of ancient Hindu achievement in Philosophy, but to call them other-worldly is to forget the richness of their intellectual activity in other aspects of culture.

One should remember that the Sanskrit literature which time neglect and the library-burners have spared to us to-day is but a part of what it was. And a proper study of all the available literature will amply show that there is a vast literature in Sanskrit which is other than philosophical or religious, which is secular in nature, which deals with worldly subjects that promote the happiness of man, and which testify to the high achievements of the ancient Hindus in secular and technical branches of learning. It would be folly to suppose that a big country with such a long history did nothing but meditate, that the Hindu nation has lived through its long history by not living life.

Keith says that nothing can be farther from truth than to suppose that the Indian was a person given to reflection and religious practices only to the neglect of practical life, and that to form a right judgment of India, one must add to *Dharma*, the two other objects of life, *Artha* and *Kama*. It is said by all historians that In-

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was proverbially wealthy; did not India then enjoy her wealth? India was rich in wares that had an international market in the world. She was draining Roman cities of their wealth with her articles of luxury. The Indians were an active maritime and commercial people who had colonies overseas.

Evidence of literature, native and foreign, philology, numismatics, and sculpture bear this out. The *Artha Sastra* and *Kama Sastra* literature, the story books of the *Kathasarisagara*, etc., the dramatic types of the *Prakarana* and the *Prahasana* and the *Bhana*, the *Kavyas*, the prose romances like the *Dasakumaracharita*—these depict a people who intensely enjoyed life. Much of the science which mediaeval Europe got was from India, through Arabia. Mathematics, Astronomy, Medicine —both human and veterinary—, grammar, poetics, minerals, gems, law, government, love, architecture, engineering, the useful arts and crafts—these were some of the numerous secular branches of study in which ancient Hindus achieved distinction. India taught the world how to spend the leisure hours intelligently by inventing the chess and the fables. When writers supplement their study of *Brahma-vidya* with a study of *Kshatriya-vidyas* and *Vaisya-vidyas*, they will have a proper understanding of Hindu culture.

It was not that every class of Indian in the olden days educated himself for a spiritual life and religious career. There was the Nagaraka, city-bred gentleman, as also the city-bred lady, who had to be proficient in the 'sixty-four arts' (*chatusshashti Kalas*) if he or she were to be respected as cultured. An examination of these sixty-four arts would show clearly whether the Hindu was active or inactive, other-worldly or this-worldly, enjoying or abstaining, virile or imbecile. One of these arts is general proficiency and competence in worldly affairs. Typical Nagarakas and social heroes like Muladeva were as much real as the Rishi and the metaphysician. The Nagaraka was not a melancholy or meditative Hindu; he did not fly away from life; he was not innocent of beauty; he enjoyed the fair of life and played his part in life's carnival.

The Hindu was not a life-scorner. To the Hindu idealist, life was an art to the beautiful realisation of which all arts and branches of learning contributed. Education was of the whole man. There was not to be an overdevelopment of only one part of one's personality. *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha* were all harmonised in the noble ideal of Hindu life. Such life was no enemy to happiness. Kautilya emphatically says in his *Artha Sastra* (I.7) that one ought not to be without happiness.[1] In his famous description of Rama

1. न निस्सुखः स्यात्।

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in the opening canto of the *Ayodhyakanda,* Valmiki says that Rama did enjoy but was not indolent.[2] Rama was very proficient in worldly affairs and knew the truth of *Dharma, Artha* and *Kama.*[3] The citizens of Ayodhya were righteous and pure in conduct, yet always joyous; they enjoyed and were not misers, yet they were not creatures of desire and avarice. They decked and were most comely, yet pure as saints in character.[4]

There was thus a harmonious life in which there was no excess on any side; a golden normality prevailed. An absurd criticism was made by a writer of those days named Arthur Duncan in his *India in Crisis* that the climate of India was more suited to indulgence or contemplation than to stern discipline or action. Other writers considered the Hindu as capable only to the two extremes of hedonism and asceticism. H. D. Griswold says in his article on *Indian Pessismism* in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* that in India there is no healthy volition—volition which alone can lead to good life on earth, that there are in India only excesses of thinking and feeling, philosophy and indulgences, monasticism and hedonism. He illustrates his criticism with Bhartrihari's *Vairagya* and *Sringara Satakas.* But it is a pity that the writer forgets that the first, the *Nitisataka* of Bhartrihari, is on right and healthy volition. That the ideal of Hinduism is always the achievement of the normal and healthy mean, the purifying of the ore of life and accepting it as gold, was very well shown by Prof. M. Hiriyanna of Mysore in his Presidential Address to the Indian Philosophy Section of the All-India Oriental Conference held at Mysore. He contrasted the Buddhistic ideal of 'run-away' and the Hindu ideal of 'live-it-well,' illustrating his point with the two poets Asvaghosha and Kalidasa and their respective poems, the *Buddhacharita* and the *Kumarasambhava.* In an address to the American Oriental Society (1926, *J.A.O.S.* Vol. 46), Prof. W. E. Clark of the University of Chicago, correcting some misconceptions about India, said that Hindu life struck a balance between the claims of *Kama, Artha* and *Moksha* and that India had been more successful than the West in striking the balance between *Pravritti* and *Nivritti.*

The life of renunciation and pure spiritual pursuit was for a few. The general rule was the normal life of a householder. There is hardly any Sanskrit authority which does not mention that the stage of the householder, the *Gri-*

खतन्त्रो न चालसः।
केके समयाचारे कृतकल्पो विशारदः।
मार्थतत्त्वज्ञः...।
पुरवरे हृष्टाः धर्मात्मानो बहुश्रुताः।
कदर्या वा...। महर्षय इवामलाः।

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hasthasrama, is the best. The *Mahabharata* says that there is no Epic to equal its own greatness even as there is nothing to equal the *Grihasthasrama*. Sriharsha says in his *Naishadhiya Charita* that like India among countries, *Garhasthya* is best among *Ashramas*. In the same verse, Sriharsha makes Damayanti prefer this world to the other world which the gods offer her.[5]

All the *Smritis* praise the *Grihasthasrama*. This body and this world have been considered as the primary means and place for one to work out one's *Karma*. To live here, discharging one's duties righteously, in the reverent spirit of co-operating in God's work, offering Him each work as if it were the flower of one's worship,[6] is the great *Karma Yoga* that the *Gita* teaches.

The *Isvasyopanishad* says: 'Continuing to do, one should wish to live for a hundred years'.[7] Krishna says in the *Bhagavata*: 'Remaining in this world, doing one's duty, sinless and pure, one attains pure knowledge and devotion to Me.'[8] Again there is the following text which assures *Moksha* even for the householder who has *Tattvajnana* and other good qualities.[9]

There is also, in the minds of the critics, a confusion which wrongly attributes the extreme monkishness of Jainism and Buddhism to Hinduism. Those who had purely spiritual yearning were given full scope in Hinduism to walk the path of Sannyasa. But the Adhikarins and candidates for it form but a small part of the vast populace. To forget this is to forget the large scope of Hinduism and its very genius.

The ordinary Hindu ideal was one of normal life. In fact, the Hindu idealist had the vision of a life of beautiful and healthy normality. He sought for a certain '*Samatva*' or harmony in his personality and in its all-round unfoldment. He strove for that ideal of moderation, *Yuktaharavihara* and *Yuktacheshta* of the *Gita*. Hardly can one be considered to have understood Hindu culture or literature if he mistakes the Hindu as a dull-pulsed, gustoless individual. There was no pessimism, no melancholy, clouding his face. Whatever one always thought of in his mind, that determined one's demeanour; to the Hindu, the *summum bonum* he sought was *Ananda*; that *Ananda* was always reflected on his face. The ideal God which his art-canons described is one always

5. वर्षेषु यद्भारतमार्यधुर्याः स्तुवन्ति गार्हस्थ्यमिवाश्रमेषु । तत्रास्मि पत्युर्वरिवस्ययेह शर्मोर्मिकर्मीरितधर्मलिप्सुः ।

6. स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य । xviii

7. कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेत् शतं समाः ।

8. अस्मिन् लोके वर्तमानः स्वधर्मस्थोऽनघः शुचिः । ज्ञानं विशुद्धमाप्नोति ..XI A 20.

9. देवार्चनरतस्तत्त्वज्ञाननिष्ठोऽतिथिप्रियः । श्राद्धं कृत्वा ददद् द्रव्यं गृहस्थोऽपि हि मुच्यते।।

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beaming with smile, *Mandasmitasmera, Prasannavadana.* When he prayed to that deity in his prayyers, he asked for not only *Mukti* (liberation) but *Bhukti* (enjoyment also. 'May we see a hundred autumns'[10] and soon, he prayed. "To obtain all, for the success of everything",[11] so ended every rite.

Further, the doctrine of *Karma* need not mean all that the missionary theoretically draws out of it. The illusory nature of the world belongs as a tenet to only one system of Hindu philosophy. There are other realistic, theistic and ethical schools of thought. The idea of the vanity of earthly glories and divine discontent are feelings not in any way peculiar to the Hindu idealist. Lastly, even the realisation of Brahman is to be enjoyed only in this world.[12] Philosophy is not a way of not living; it is a way of living.

To say that to the Hindu, enjoyment and life are not British imports or missionary administrations is not to say that the Hindus were a race of hedonists, materialists, Bohemians or Epicureans. As pointed out before, there was the ideal of the harmony of *Trivarga* or the harmonious blending of ethics, earning and enjoyment in one's life. Enjoyment and acquisition (*Kama* and *Artha*) were always regulated by *Dharma*, righteousness. Those who are motivated only by enjoyment and only by acquisition are both condemned. Rama tells Lakshmana: "He who is after material gain only is to be scorned: so also to be essentially pleasure-seeking is not praiseworthy."[13]

Both the *Arthacharya* and the *Kamacharya*, namely Kautilya and Vatsyayana respectively insist on *Artha* and *Kama* being enjoyed without the violation of *Dharma*. In the very opening, Kautilya insists on sense-control for the prince and forbids sexual lawlessness, cupidity and cruelty. Hinduism denies not the joys of life; it only wants to draw a limit and a method for the enjoyment. Says poet Nilakantha Dikshita in his *Santivilasa*: "Regarding wife, sons, bed, food, ornament, clothing and the like being objects of human longing, who says 'nay' to these things? But there are certain conditions laid down in enjoying these."[14] And the Lord Himself blesses all desires (*Kamas*) that are consistent with *Dharma*.[15]

Neither for the individual nor for the State does Hinduism lay

10. पश्येम शरदः शतम् ।
11. सर्वस्याप्त्यै सर्वस्य जित्यै ।
12. अन्न ब्रह्म समश्नते ।
13. द्वेष्यो भवत्यर्थपरो हि लोके कामात्मता खल्वपि न प्रशस्ता ।
14. दाराः पुत्रा वसनमशनं भूषणाच्छादने वा यच्चेदृक्षं पुमभिलषितं तेषु 'मा'शब्दिक. कः। किन्त्वेतेषां भवति नियमः सेवने कोऽपि कोऽपि द्वेषस्तस्मिन्नपि भवति चेत्, तत्र वक्ता कृतान्तः ॥
15. धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ।

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Kama or *Artha* as the main impulse. To encroach upon another's possessions is to violate *Dharma*.[16] Personal or national imperialism is condemned. When Jabali tempts Rama with a forceful plea for *Artha*, out comes Rama, condemning that State and its king who have converted their *Dharma* into a crime, who in their reckless pursuit of more and more have become low, wicked and sinful. Such kingship and rule, Rama says, he will cast away.[17]

Of that great normal life in which *Trivarga* found a harmonious expression, in which there was *Pravrtti* (action) in *Nivrtti* (renunciation), and *Nivrtti* in *Pravritti*, in which the man lived and enjoyed but did not transgress the bounds of *Dharma*, what greater ideal for us can there be than the *Avatar* who incarnated to show how a noble man could live? For such a life, one should be an 'adept', a *Kusala* in *Karma*, an expert, *Vichakshana*, one knowing and decisive of what to do and what not to do and capable of distinguishing *Dharma* from *Dharmabhasa* (semblance of *Dharma*) and *Karma* from *Karmabhasa* (semblance of *Karma*). This ideal was embodied in Rama. He acted decisively at all critical situations, being superior in his wisdom over Jabalis and Vasishthas. In a great but little cited verse, Rama says of himself to Jabali: 'Content in my pleasure, I am conducting my life's course without deceit, with faith in the eternal values of Truth and Right and with thorough discrimation of what is fit to be done and what is unfit.'[18] □ □ □

16. मा गृधः कस्यस्विद् धनम् ।

17. शास्त्रं धर्ममहं त्यक्ष्ये ह्यधर्मं धर्मसंहितम् ।
क्षुद्रैर्नृशंसैः पापैश्च सेवितं पापकर्मभिः ।।

18. संतुष्टपञ्चवर्गोऽहं लोकयात्रां प्रवर्तये ।
अकुहः श्रद्दधानश्च कार्याकार्यविचक्षणः ।।

GLADNESS OF HEART

If the world's a "vale of tears,"
Smile till rainbows span it;
Breathe the love that life endears.
Clear from clouds to fan it.
Of your gladness lend a gleam
Unto souls that shivers;
Show them how dark sorrow's stream
Blends with hope's bright river.

L. Larcom

I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are. How much the world needs it! How easily it is done. How instantaneously it acts. How unfailingly it is remembered.. How superabundantly it pays itself back—for there is no debtor in the world so honourable, so superbly honourable, as love.

—H. Drummond

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KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM

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Loved and lionised by the people of India and Pakistan alike, Kazi Nazrul Islam who died in Dacca on August 29, 1976 was a poet of revolution of whom Netaji Subhaschandra Bose said once "On our way to war, we shall march to the rhythm of Nazrul's songs. On our way to prison cells, too, we shall sing his songs and proceed."

NAZRUL ISLAM

The Rebel Poet

MONI BAGCHEE

KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM (1899-1976) was all along a rebel against what was wrong and unjust. Through his poems and numerous songs, which bore ample testimony to his creative genius, he once inspired the then moribund society of our country. Thus he belonged as much to Bengal as to whole of India as was the case with Rabindranath.

The poet who sang of revolution, the man who was full of joviality and generally rumbustious, Nazrul Islam was always generous to a fault and capable of rising to great heights in moments of crisis. Bengal's youth worshipped Tagore; he was the universal man. It clasped Nazrul to its bosom; he was their own. What matters to the public is neither his poetry nor his songs, but his name, which, during the poet's lifetime, was universally believed to be a charm and used by all sorts of people on every likely and unlikely occasion. He was really a poet *of* the people.

Nazrul Islam, judged by any standard, was the greatest poetic energy in Bengali literature, next to Rabindranath Tagore, whose fame was at its highest when young Nazrul, an exhavildar of the First World War, turned from fighting to writing. Inevitably, he fell under Tagore's spell, but at the same time, loudly proclaimed his distinct individua-

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lity. Here, then, was a new voice, a new force.

Born in a distant village in Burdwan, West Bengal, at the close of the last century, Nazrul's childhood was spent in grinding poverty which compelled him, while still a small boy, to join a village theatrical troupe, then to work as a houseboy in a railway guard's quarters and finally serve as attendant-cum-errand boy in a bakery. Here, his employer was so taken by his brightness and engaging ways that he got him enrolled in a school. He changed school a couple of times, got a double promotion but when he was in Class X, he suddenly decided to leave school and join the 49th Bengali Regiment. His sole aim, he said later, was to learn the art of warfare for use in the freedom struggle. He rose to the rank of havildar and was one of the two men known personally to each and every soldier of the regiment.

After a while he was posted in Karachi and there he started writing for a Bengali literary journal, which though owned and edited by the members of his community, followed strictly non-communal ideals. His biographers tell us that it was at this time that he also studied Arabic and Persian, translated the *Rubayyat-i-Omar-Khayyam* into Bengali from the original Persian, studied Sanskrit and became deeply immersed in Muslim philosophy and Hindu thought.

Early in 1920, when the Bengali Regiment was disbanded, Nazrul came to Calcutta. His financial outlook was bleak but he preferred to live in poverty rather than accept a job that would stiffle his literary career. He became very popular due to his beautiful renderings of Tagore's songs and his capacity for making friends. Nazrul's arrival in Calcutta almost synchronized with the publication of the first issue of *Muslim Bharat*, a literary monthly journal, which helped dispel the prevailing notion that the Bengali Muslim was indifferent to his mother tongue. The office of the journal was also the meeting place of prominent litterateurs, both Hindu and Muslim. His first novel, *Bandhanhara* (The Unfettered), was serialised in the journal. Nazrul was 22 when he wrote it.

It was inevitable for a man of Nazrul's temper and temperament that he should join the freedom struggle. Friends tried to dissuade him but did not succeed. True, literature was his first love but that alone could not contain his boundless energy nor furnish the medium for his fiery spirit. He joined the non-cooperation movement, and soon after appeared his famous poem 'Bidrohi' (The Rebel) which established Nazrul as the rebel and revolutionary poet of Bengal. 'I am the carrier of rebellion all over the earth'—this line at once reminded

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us of Byron—the rebel poet of English literature. People were thrilled; they had never read anything like it before. When he read the poem to Tagore, the Nobel Laureate congratulated the "mutinous child of the goddess of the universe".

The songs written by Nazrul were now on everybody's lips. Many of his books were banned but sold like hot cakes under the counter. Indeed without Kazi Nazrul Islam, the freedom movement of Bengal would have lost much of its colour. Netaji Subhaschandra Bose was not far from truth when he once said: "On our way to the war, we shall march to the rhythm of Nazrul's songs. On our way to prison cells, too, we shall sing his songs and proceed."

The massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh coupled with deep resentment of Muslims against the dissolution of the Caliphate and dismemberment of Turkey, the non-cooperation movement of Gandhiji and other happenings influenced Nazrul considerably, and there is a clear reflection of it in his songs and poems composed during this resurgent period in the history of our struggle for freedom. Nazrul played exactly the same role which Rabindranath once played during the time of Swadeshi or the anti-Partition movement. Both of them were lovers of freedom and came to be regarded as nation's most beloved poets.

He was for a time a member of the Bengal Provincial Committee and later helped to form the Labour Swaraj Party of the Indian National Congress, a pioneer trade union and kisan organisation. He never became a member of the Communist Party, though the trend of many of his songs was socialistic and he was among the first writers to hail the Russian revolution. He also translated the Internationale into Bengali. He considered Gandhiji as the harbinger of independence while many others were sceptic about his creed of Satyagraha.

In 1922, Nazrul began the Bengal biweekly *Dhumketu* (The Comet), a political journal, and revealed a surprising flair for journalism. He sought Tagore's blessings for it and promptly came a characteristic poem from the aging poet. The journal attracted to itself many people who later became famous literary or political figures. In January 1923, he was sent up for trial for a seditious poem he had written and which had appeared in an issue of *Dhumaketu*. He did not defend himself in the court, but his statement is memorable for its literary quality. He was given a year's rigorous imprisonment. On one occasion during his jail term he fasted for 39 days in protest against humiliating conditions there. He rejected all appeals to give it up and held on until he won his point. All his admirers including Rabindranath and Saratchandra,

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were amazed at his grit and determination.

In April 1924 he married Pramila Sen Gupta; he, however true to himself, did not insist on his bride's conversion. This marriage remained a living symbol—until Pramila's death 40 years later—of the communal harmony that has found beautiful expression in Nazrul's life and works. The couple was always poor, except for a few years in the thirties, but they lived a full and happy life.

But the cruel fate dealt a heavy blow to the rebel poet. After one of their three sons died, Pramila was stricken with paralysis and remained in bed for 23 years. Nazrul himself lost his mental faculties which doctors attributed to overwork. Few could detect the slow breaking up of this vigorous man, until one day (and that was in July 1942) his speech became blurred and he seemed to be unable to continue a talk he was giving at the All-India Radio (they were not pre-recorded then). A friend brought him home.

The joyous voice was soon stilled but the flesh refused to be stilled. Funds were raised for his treatment. He was later taken to London, Vienna and Moscow, but according to specialists in these cities, it was too late. The volcano was extinguished for ever and it remained in the state for more than three decades until

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death stood at his door in a Dacca hospital at 10 a.m. on August 29, 1976. The restless spirit became quiet for ever. Thus ended a life which has been the most colourful, varied, and, in its final phase, the most harrowing.

II

Such is the external scenery of the rebel poet's life which was crowded with events. He was abused and doted on by Hindus and Muslims alike, himself partaking the life of both. To meet him was to love him, for his was one of the most picturesque and attractive personalities in our recent history. Where he was there was delight and gesture, and, of course, song. A good voice was not one of his endowments, but the joy, the tireless joy he brought to the singing of his own songs kept his audience for hours, and for hours together he would and could sing.

It is in his songs that Nazrul Islam has given us his best. The poet stands above in the realm of music. in the glory of his own creation. He composed a little more than four thousand songs which are as varied as the tunes in which he has clothed them.

Endowed with a rare faculty of music, he used flowery words with a skill and technique that shunned monotony. Well conversant with the intricacies of classical music—a profound knowledge of *ragas* and *raginis*, current and

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obsolete—Nazrul simplified the *raga-sangeet* and made his own contribution an effective medium of its expression. He had infused national spirit through his inspiring marching songs. He turned Bengali from a calm, smooth and passive language into a vibrant and roaring torrent of expression of both the subtle and delicate emotion and the fiery and patriotic sentiments.

Nazrul introduced the gazal form to Bengali music which earned for him a great reputation. He was a composer in the Indian sense, making both the words and the music. Music and the poetry of words, lovingly allied in India, are inseparably wedded in Bengal, so that a composer must also be a gifted word-wielder. It is not surprising, therefore, that our greatest composer should also be our greatest poet; in the songs of Rabindranath, the poetry and the music seem to be born for one another. What emerges out of this perfect union is not a heightening of our pleasure in poetry or in music, but a third factor, something more disembodied than poetry can be, and more intellectual than the nature of music will allow, winging its way upwards to a heaven where, unaided, neither music nor poetry can reach. Nazrul attained this rare mastery in song and his songs will serve, more than any other of his work, to convince us of his essential validity.

He himself was so much sur-

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guine of it that he once confided to the writer of this piece: "I can easily claim immortality through my songs, if not through my poems. Truly so." In the best of his songs we meet a jocund spirit, a spirit so happy to live that it never cares to enquire into the meaning of life. A versatile song maker, he had many moods and the right phrase for each. It is doubtful whether he will be remembered as the 'rebel-poet' or 'the poet of the have-nots', but he will certainly be remembered by the posterity with a garland of songs which Time will wear.

Now a few words about the poet Nazrul. He was a loud poet; he entered on the literary scene of Bengal not with a whimper but with a bang. His poetry is boisterous. He wrote much that is heart-winning and heart-warming as well along with a lot of rant, himself unable to discern the difference. One misses the divine touch of inspiration in many of his poems.

Thus one feels, as one reads him, that words simply got the better of him, so that he could never pause to ponder or alter, and was rather at a loss where to stop. It is said that he could produce a fairly lengthy piece in course of half-an-hour or so. The feat was marvellous and envious no doubt; yet it did not work always, resulting in lamentable lapses. We shall not be far from truth if we say that Tagore's con-

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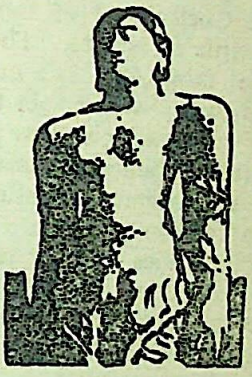

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ception of serene and sublime poetry was beyond the reach of this loud poet whose gift was rather like Byron's: gorgeous, but undependable; the same raw violence; that interminable, almost involuntary flow; that carefree and even careless workmanship; and above all, that thinness of thought-substance.

What Goethe said of Byron is literally true of Nazrul: "The moment he thinks, he is a child." Yet the fact will remain that it was the raw and boisterous poetry of Nazrul combining freshness and vigour, that inspired Bengal during the freedom struggle.

Literary critics may not rate his poetry particularly high, its extravagance tends to tire; readers today may also put off by what may posturing. But his passion was genuine. Besides, Nazrul's poetry needs to be judged in its context; if one recalls the social and political background, one can realize the revolutionary impact of his work which had a direct appeal not many could resist.

Thus Kazi Nazrul Islam will remain a symbol of much that is inspiring and invigorating in Bengali culture. What he symbolized should survive. His was above all, the spirit of eternal youth, youth that exults in its own vitality and wages war against anything that tends to stifle life. Hence his passionate commitment to the cause of suffering humanity, his revolt against injustice and oppression.

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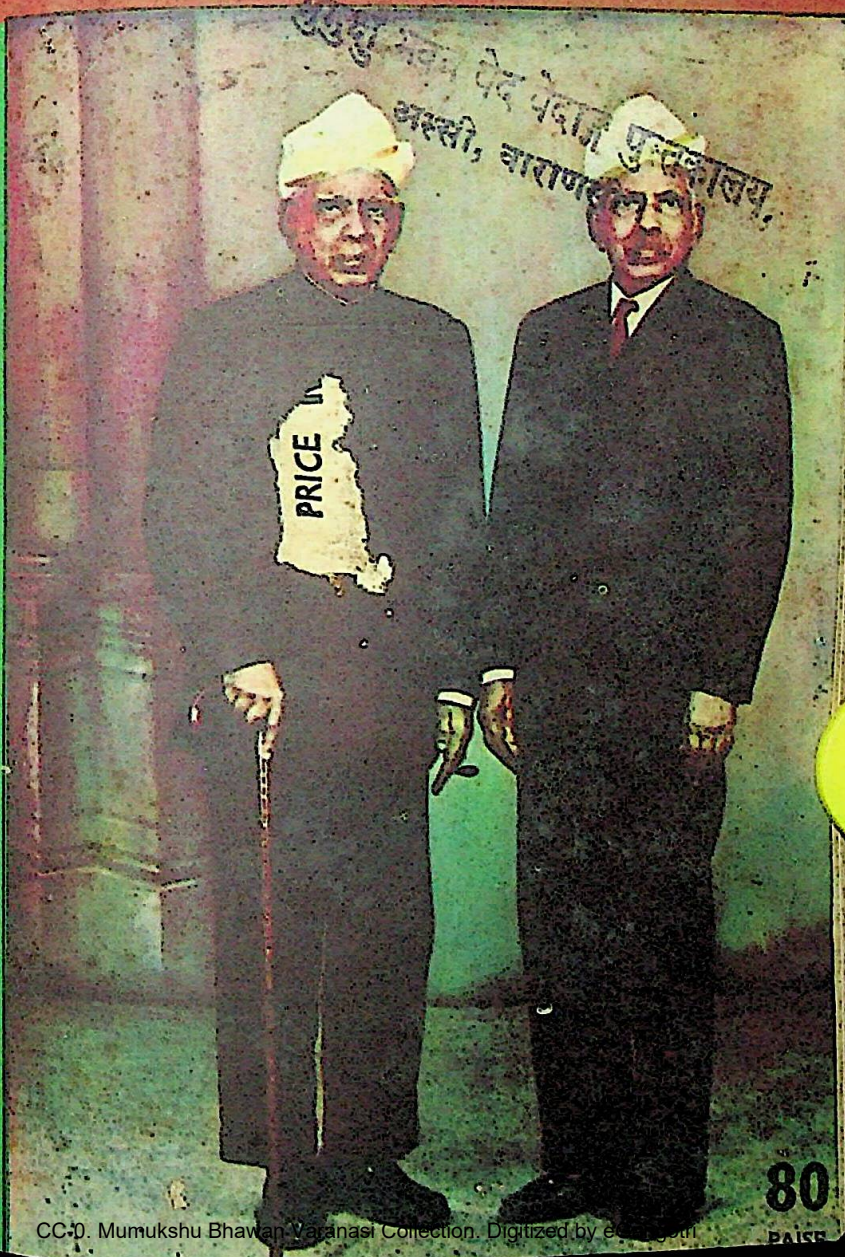

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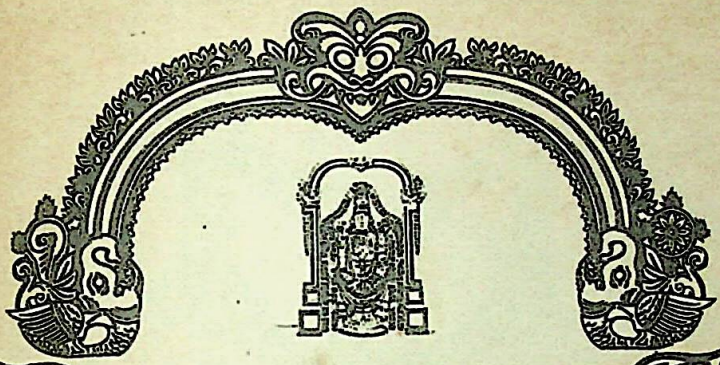

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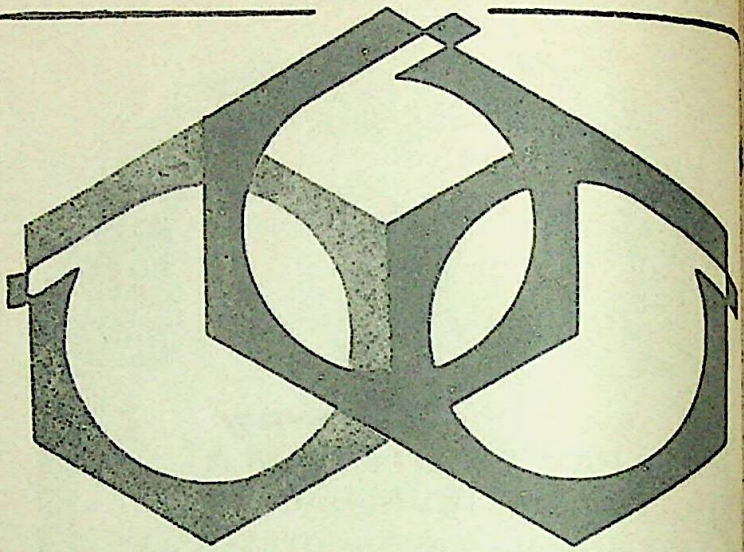

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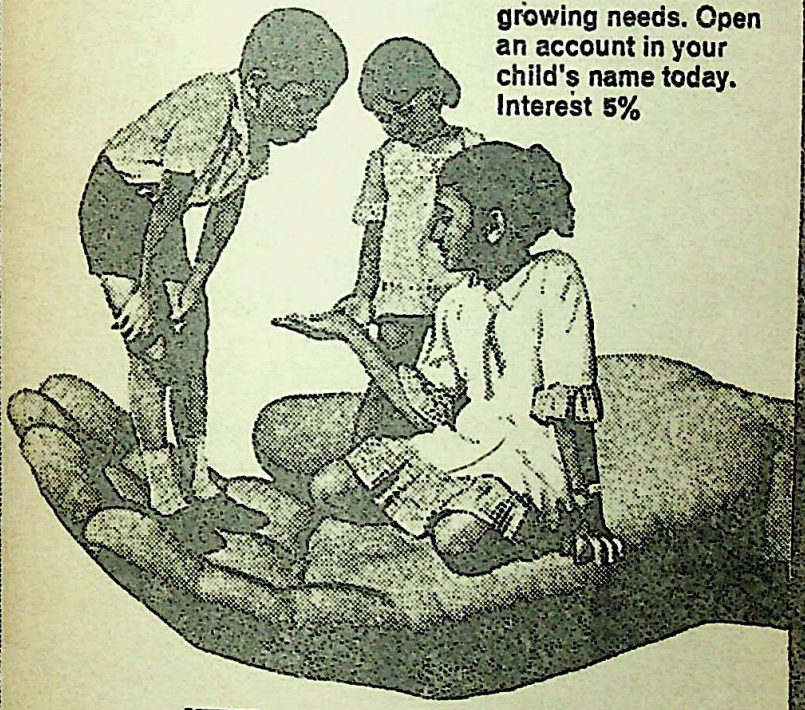

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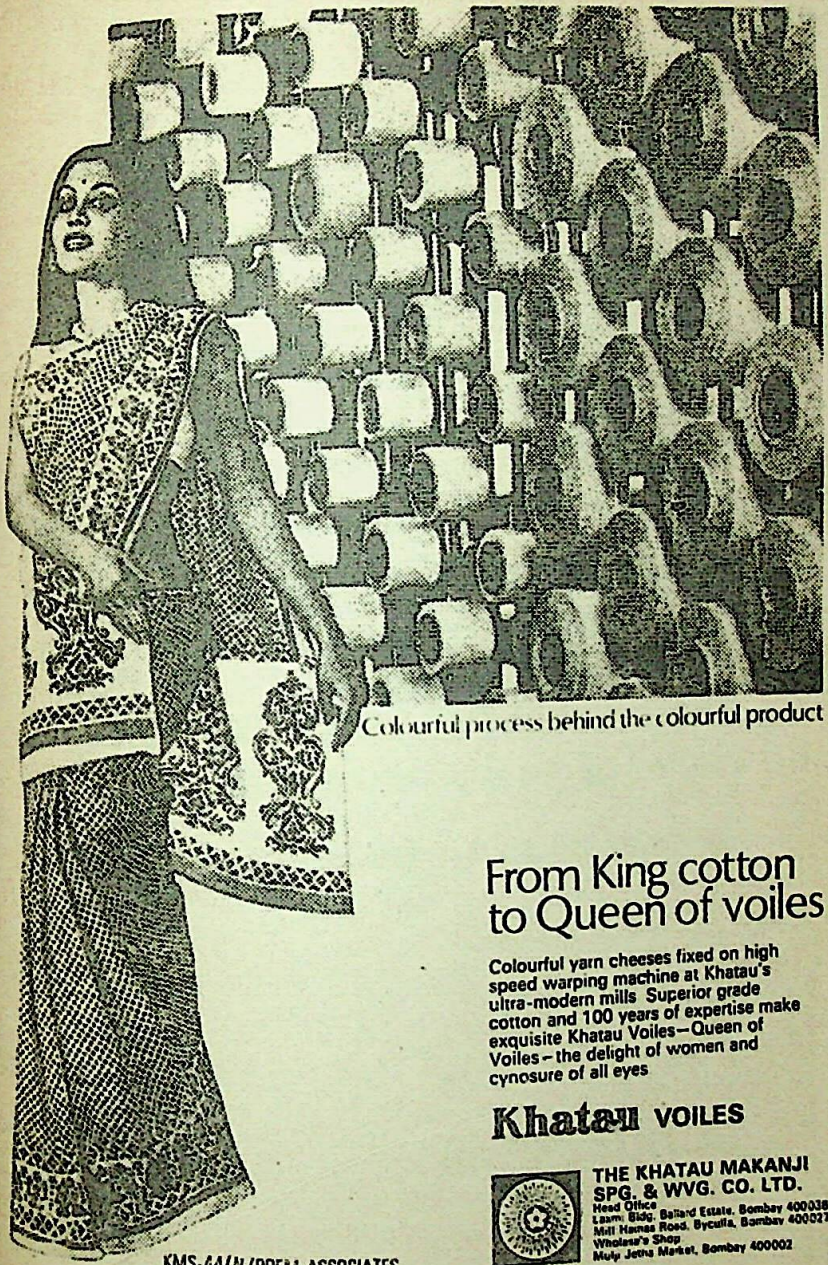

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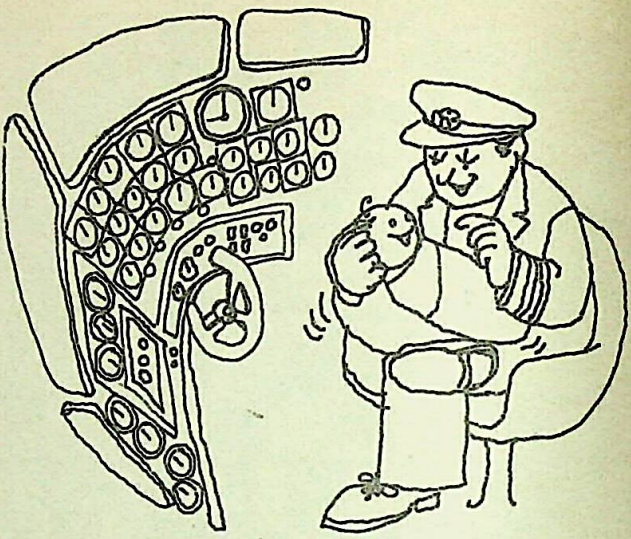

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Vol. XXIII, No. 1

AUGUST 1, 1976

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FRONT COVER:

The Twin Stalwarts:

Dr. Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Right) Dr. Sir Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar

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An Issue You Shouldn't Miss

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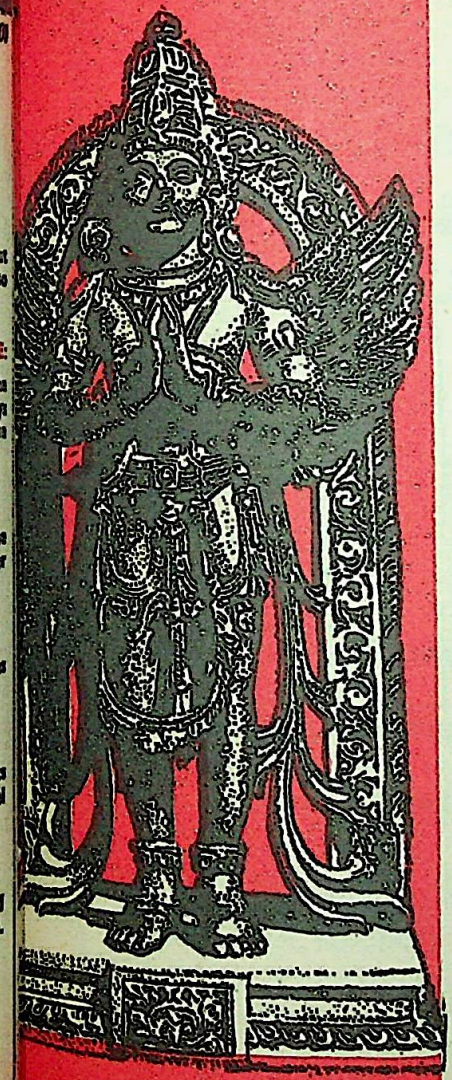
आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

Rigveda I-89-i



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PRAYER FOR SUCCESS

जयदे जगदानन्दे जगदेकप्रपूजिते ।
जय सर्वगते दुर्गे जगद्धात्रि नमोऽस्तु ते ।।

Thou art the giver of success, the bliss of the world, the one object of its adoration. Glory unto Thee. Thou art all-pervading and rescuest men from difficulties. O Thou Protectress of the universe, salutations to Thee.

—*Jagaddhaatristava.*

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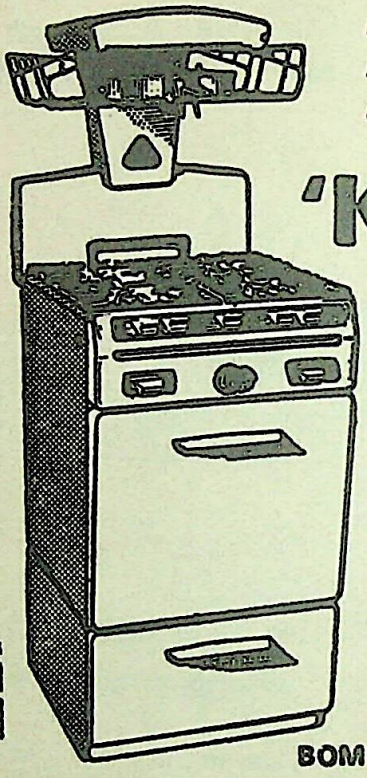

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Kulapati Vani

CREATIVE RESISTANCE

THE growth of personality—both of individuals and groups—is the result of Creative Resistance. Resistance, to be creative, must be inspired by an effort of imagination to realize an object which has a living existence in one's mind.

Yearning is the driving force behind this effort, behind all growth. It has to be maintained at a white heat whenever the process of Becoming has to be shortened and perfected. "Yoga only comes to him who possesses *samvega*—intense yearning," says Patanjali.

This indwelling of the Supreme comes by intensifying the *samvega*—yearning, which ceaselessly seeks self-surrender. Intellect, in this matter, is barren; emotion quivering with powerful effort of the imagination only can help one towards it.

A man may be ceaselessly active; he may also accomplish results; but he may be lost all the same, for efforts may be unaccompanied by a persistent yearning to Become.

When he loses the power of experiencing this *samvega*, his condition becomes appalling. He becomes a fossil; he is self-complacent, satisfied with himself; or a failure, a wreck. Life, for him, loses its vitality; becomes routine. He makes efforts to recover himself, but cannot. The old enthusiasms have no chance for him. His personality then fades away. He is in "impure hell."

We throw away opportunities of strengthening the faculty to Become. Life for us is either a bewildering struggle or a soulless acquiescence. We have not even the faculty Arjuna had "of being filled with wonderment, his body thrilled with awe," for the humanity which drove him to fold his hands and bow his head before the grandeur which God vouchsafed him. We are denied the grace which makes life worth living.

"'Indwelling" of the Supreme comes to him who ceaselessly meditates upon Him; who with high-strung emotion yearns to see Him, touch Him, love Him.

□ □ □

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Significance of Muruga

MURUGA whose name implies fragrance, youth, divinity and beauty is the son of Lord Shiva and brother of the elephant-headed god, Ganapati. He is another aspect of the Supreme One indeed. Muruga is also known as Skanda or Subrahmanya according to Sanskrit tradition. Apart from these popular names, Lord Muruga has numerous other names too like Seyon, Kandan, Velan, Kumaran, and Kartikeya.

What is the significance of his incarnation?

In Devaloka, the Suras (gods) were tormented by Asuras (demons) like Surapadma, Tarakasura, Simhamukhasura, Kraunchasura and Bhanugopa. Unable to bear the torture of the Rakshasas (demons), the Devas (celestials) approached Lord Shiva and implored Him to protect them. By emitting six holy sparks capable of destroying the unholy Asuras, Lord Shiva directed the gods to carry the sparks.

Vayu (the god of wind) and Agni (the god of fire), who volunteered on behalf of gods to carry the sparks, were unable to bear the heat and ultimately they dropped the sparks in the Saravana Poigai (a tank atop the Himayas).

The divine sparks took the form of a baby having 6 faces (Shanmukha) and 12 arms. Later, this unique child assumed the shape of six different normal infants in order to please the long-cherished desire of six Kartika celestial damsels (presiding deities of the constellation Pleiads) who were eager to suckle and rear the unearthly children.

Having learnt the genesis of the divine child, Parvati accompanied by her husband, Lord Shiva, went to the banks of the tank to have a glimpse at their infants. Parvati fondled the new-borns and, by uniting them into one divine child christened it as "Skanda" (warrior god).

Even while Skanda was a child his pranks were really superhuman and astounding. He would split huge mountains asunder; merge the seven seas; interchange the course of planets. Nevertheless his extraordinary feats least affected the inhabitants of the earth.

Once Indra (the chief of the celestials), unaware that Subrahmanya was the son of Lord Shiva confronted him only to swoon

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T. V. SESHADRI

in Indian Mythology

Later, with the timely appearance of Brihaspathi (divine apothecary) he regained his consciousness and realised Subrahmanya's greatness.

On another occasion, Skanda imprisoned Lord Brahma (the Creator) who could not promptly explain to him the significance of the word, 'Om', and subsequently the omniscient Skanda became the Parama Guru (Preceptor of his own Father) in whose ears he whispered the real meaning of Pranava, and dispelled the conceit of Brahma.

Meanwhile, the atrocious Surapadma had imprisoned the son of Indra. Muruga's pleadings to the adamant demon to release the hostage and submit himself were futile. Infuriated, Muruga rallied his celestial forces and waged a protracted war against Asuras who were led by Surapadma. Surapadma's countless tricks to defeat the Suras proved ridiculous and worthless. Surapadma's allies fell one by one. Even Kraunchasura, who had taken the shape of a hill, was cleft by the javelin of Murugan. At last Surapadma transformed himself into a mango tree

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which was split into two by omnipotent javelin of Velan (Muruga). Ultimately, Surapadma, before breathing his last, asked for a boon which was granted by Lord Muruga. The demon wished that his mortal remains, which were in the form of two halves of a tree, assume the shape of a cock and a peacock—the former permanently adorning Lord Muruga's banner and the latter becoming His vehicle for ever.

Overjoyed by Lord Muruga's triumph over the evil forces of Surapadma, the denizens of heaven showered praise on Him. Later Muruga married Devasenai, daughter of Tirumal (Vishnu).

Another divine damsel called Sundaravalli, by sheer penance, had aspired to become the consort of Muruga. For fulfilment of her wish, she had been ordained by the Lord to be born as a human being and bred up in sylvan surroundings on earth.

Accordingly, she became Valli, a most beautiful maid, who lived amidst hunting folk. Narada, the divine sage, who was impressed by her beauty, expatiated about it to Muruga who descended to earth to marry Valli. Under the guise of a hunter and an old man he wooed her. Not knowing that masquerading person is no than Muruga, Valli spurned love in the beginning and at recognised her Lover par excellence when she too became consort!

The mythological account of incarnation of Lord Muruga, plies that the battle between S and Asuras signifies not only conflict between good and but also the trials and tribulat faced by god-fearing souls. P verization of mountain Krauñ implies the diffusion of M (delusion), and destruction Surapadma, the redemption of soul from its egoism. Fa learning from a son suggests however erudite an aged man be, he should not hesitate to lighten himself from competent sons though younger in age. U between Valli and Lord Mur represents bridal mysticism (N yaki-nayaka bhava) or, in ot words, the union between jiva (individual soul) and Paramat (Supreme Soul).

Devasenapati (Lord Murug implies *Jnanasakti*, Valli, *Ic sakti* and Devasenai, *Kriyasak* all the three *saktis* (energies) le ing the soul to the path of reden tion. □ □

The man who cannot appreciate music and literature is exactly like the lower animals, even though he may not possess horns and a tail; though he eat not grass yet he lives a life precisely like that of that kind.

—Bhartrihari

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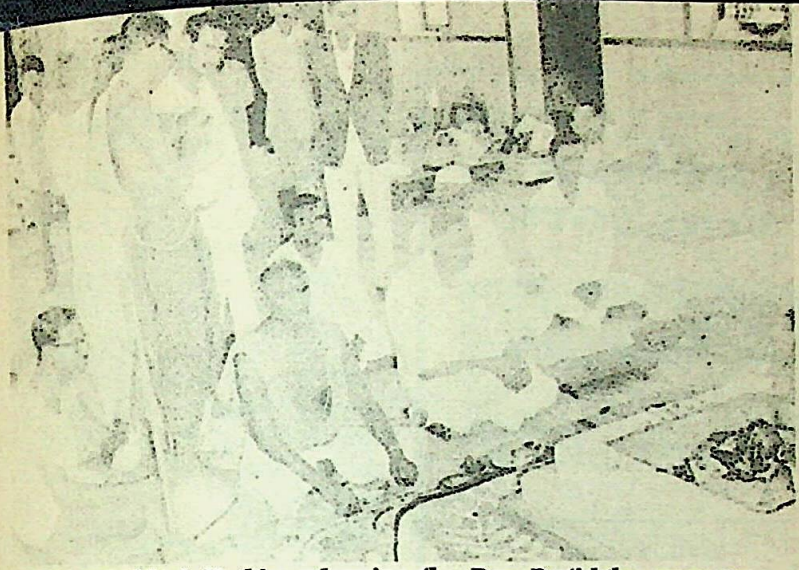


Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi performing the Pran-Pratishtha ceremony.

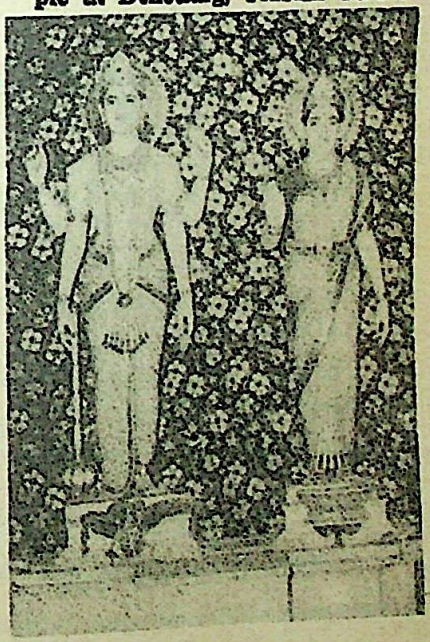
The Pran - Pratishtha Ceremony

The Pran-Pratishtha ceremony in the temple of Lakshmi-Narayan at Dehotsarg, Prabhas Patan, was recently performed by Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, Vice-Chairman of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and one of the Trustees of Shree Somnath Trust.

Enthusiastic scenes marked the occasion as the old Lakshmi-Narayan Temple and the entire area of Dehotsarg have history and sanctity behind it. The ceremonies performed with proper rituals by learned Brahmins were attended by people in large numbers on all the three days.

When the historic decision to renovate the Somnath Temple was taken, Dr. K. M. Munshi, Founder-President of the Bhavan, had referring to Dehotsarg where

Idols of Lakshmi and Narayan in the renovated Lakshmi-Narayan temple at Dehotsarg, Prabhas Patan.



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Lord Krishna 'shuffled off [his] mortal coil', said:

> "These few feet of earth [are] holiest in the wide world [as] here He reclined in the [last] few moments of His earthly existence."

He had, therefore, desired that [the] place should be invested with [the] sanctity, dignity and beauty [it] deserves' and it is a matter [of] gratification that this has [been] done.

Shri Birla Jan-Kalyan Tr[ust] have donated Rs. 5 lakhs for [the] renovation of Lakshmi-Naray[an] Temple and the development [of] the precincts of Dehotsarg.

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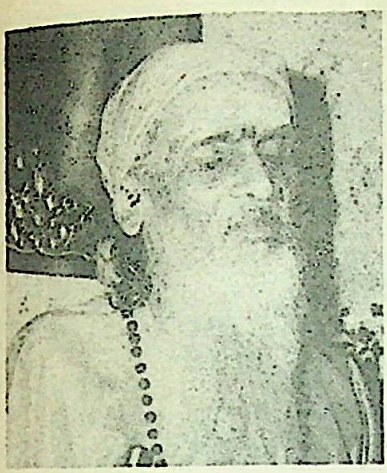

This Peace Anthem was sung in Berlin Peace Conference with orchestra

Peace Anthem

KAVI YOGI
MAHARSHI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

Peace for all, peace for all,
For all the countries peace!
Joy for all, joy for all,
For all the nations joy!

A rosy morning peace,
A smiling summer joy! (*Peace*)

All for each and each for all,
This is the golden rule;
Life and Light and Love for all,
For all that live our love! (*Peace*)

Work and food and clothes for all,
Equal status for all,
Health and home and school for all,
A happy world for all! (*Peace*)

No idle rich, no more beggars,
All are equal workers;
No more tears, no more fears,
The heart is full of cheers! (*Peace*)

No atom scare, no fat mammon,
No room for war demon;
Like leaves in trees, like rays in sun,

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We are one communion,
One Divine communion!

The good in you is good for all,
Your life is life for all.
The God in you is God for all,
Your love is love for all! (Peace)

For he or she or it or rest,
This collective life is best.
This Universal Life is best,
North or South, or East or West. (Peace)

Peace for plants and birds and beasts,
For hills and streams and woods,
Peace in home — land and air and sea,
Dynamic peace we see.

Peace for all, Peace for all,
Immortal Peace for all!

Song of Unity

Trees are many : the grove is one;
Branches are many, tree is one;
Shores are many, sea is one;
Limbs are many, body is one;
Bodies are many, Self is one;
Stars are many, sky is one;
Flowers are many, honey is one;
Pages are many, book is one;
Thoughts are many, thinker is one;
Tastes are many, taster is one;
Actors are many, the drama is one;
Nations are many, world is one;
Religions are many, Truth is one;
The wise are many, wisdom is one;
Beings are many, breath is one;
Classes are many, college is one.
Find out this One behind the many,
Then life shall enjoy peaceful harmony.

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Chiranjeevi Vibhishana

AN IMAGINARY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER SEVEN

Life Everlasting

K. SREENIVASAN

I have come almost to the end of my story.

After the death of Ravana, I brought Sita to my palace from the Asoka grove. My wife and daughter helped her to bathe and dress. She was frail and thin as a result of the sorrow and indignities she had suffered at the hands of the Rakshasis. We adorned her with silks and ornaments and flowers. In spite of all her sufferings, she was indescribably lovely. We took her to Rama in a covered palanquin, as a huge crowd of Rakshasas and Vanaras gathered round to have a look at the woman who was the cause of it all. She slowly got down from the palanquin, bowed before Rama and touched his feet.

Though Rama was an incar tion of God, I was surprised behaved like any other ord human being would have under similar circumstances. turned to her and said, "I being carried away by Ravana a great shame on me and my a That shame has now been ave ed. But you have lived under protection of a Rakshasa for months. Therefore, how can take you back? I have to bid farewell."

The entire assembly was shoc and grieved beyond measur hear these words. That any as sion should be cast on the cha of a virtuous and noble lady Sita was unthinkable. But this should be done in public by own husband, who was consid divine and all-knowing, was gedy indeed.

Sita turned to him with blaz eyes, but her words were soft polite. "My Lord," she exclai "I am the daughter of Janaka great king and the daughter-in-

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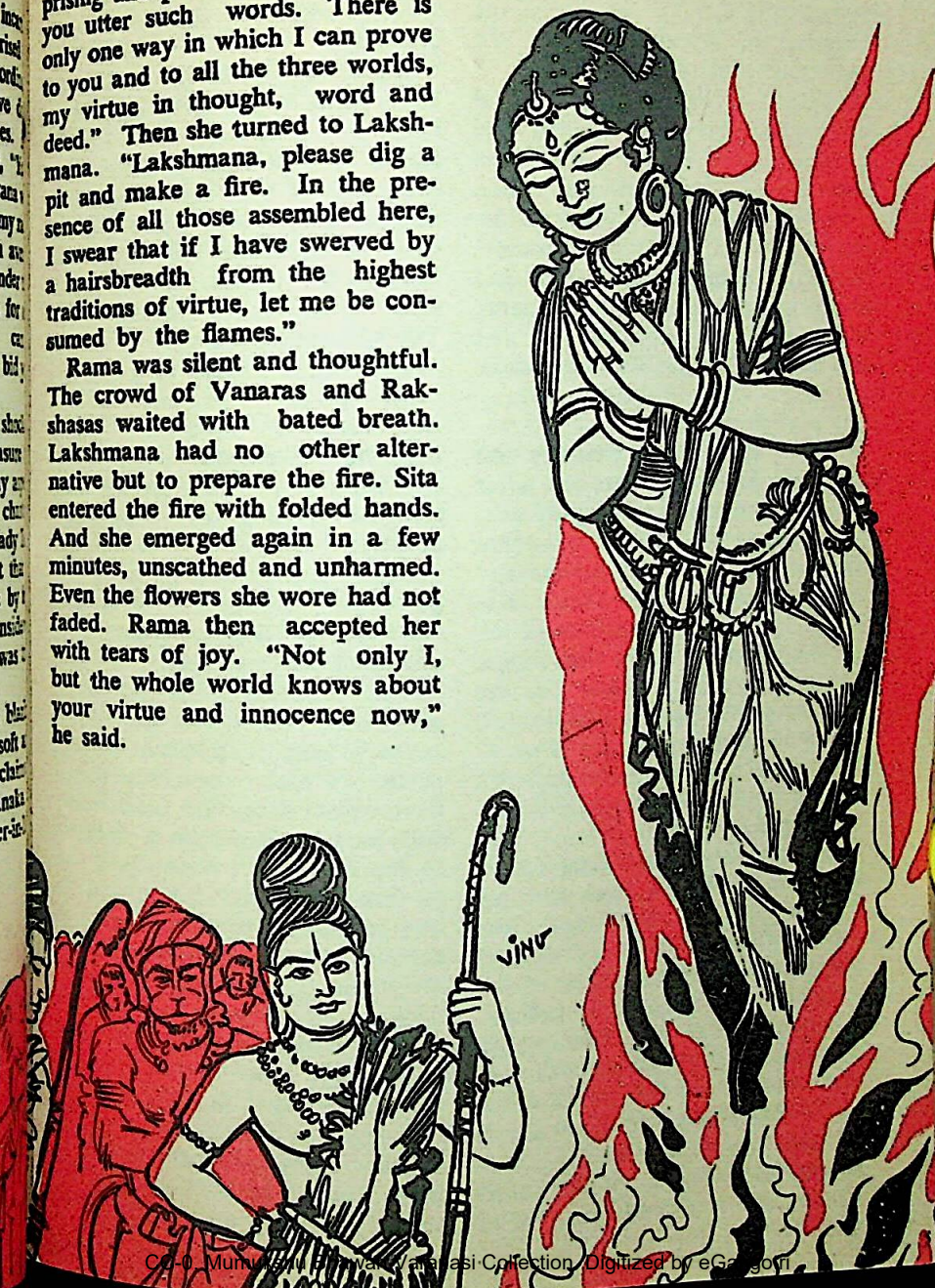
of Dasaratha, another great ruler. I am married to you. It is surprising and painful for me to hear you utter such words. There is only one way in which I can prove to you and to all the three worlds, my virtue in thought, word and deed." Then she turned to Lakshmana. "Lakshmana, please dig a pit and make a fire. In the presence of all those assembled here, I swear that if I have swerved by a hairsbreadth from the highest traditions of virtue, let me be consumed by the flames."

Rama was silent and thoughtful. The crowd of Vanaras and Rakshasas waited with bated breath. Lakshmana had no other alternative but to prepare the fire. Sita entered the fire with folded hands. And she emerged again in a few minutes, unscathed and unharmed. Even the flowers she wore had not faded. Rama then accepted her with tears of joy. "Not only I, but the whole world knows about your virtue and innocence now," he said.



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After my coronation, Rama and Lakshmana had to return to the kingdom of Ayodhya since the period of their exile was over. I provided them with an aerial chariot and they all departed and most of the Vanara chieftains with them. I too followed them, since I had been invited to be present at Sri Rama's coronation. Finally, I returned to Lanka and to my subjects to begin the long, hard task of reconstruction and regeneration of the Rakshasa race.

2

After the grand passions and orgies of Ravana's court and after the excitement and tragedy of war, there was now peace in Lanka. There was gloom and sorrow and disappointment, but there was also a calm after the storm of the great conflict, a calm that Lanka had not known for ages. As the country slowly limped back to normalcy, I had plenty of time to look back and consider my own role in the historic events that had taken place recently.

Slowly, the Rakshasas have learnt to accept me, even love me a little perhaps. But they often talk wistfully about the glory and the grandeur of the past, of the greatness of Ravana and Indrajit. They talk about the golden age in Rakshasa history. Kumbhakarna, they remember with great affection. But Vibhishana, they say is allright; he is still around somewhere, but no one quite knows where. He is a good man, ful of good intentions, but he does measure up to the stature Ravana.

Under my care, the Raksh have learnt to till the soil, crops and tend cattle. They learnt to earn their livelihood the sweat of their brows, but difficult for them. Centuries care-free nomadic life cannot harnessed overnight to the di pline of hard and regular w The concept of the spirit is too substantial for them to grasp, alone pursue. As one gen tion succeeds another, I wa their halting progress and inte tion with the rest of humanity mingled feelings of hope anxiety.

But it is my own personal re ponsibility in the conflict worries me. Some people h described me as part saint and p traitor. The fact is, no on person has had to face the conf between love and duty, betwe patriotism and conscience that have had to face. No doubt ma will have to face such a dilem in the future, but none have to face it before. I have had one to guide me, no precedent follow. The younger brothers Sri Rama did not have a diffic decision involving a conflict values. They merely did th duty as laid down by the code, culture and the traditions of Kshatriyas. When Sri Rama expelled from the kingdom, Lak mana could have stayed in capital in luxury and comfort. P

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he followed his elder brother into the forest, not only because he felt it was his duty, but he loved to be with his brother. When Bharata learnt that the rightful heir had abdicated, he did what any true Kshatriya would have done. He tried to persuade his elder brother to return to the throne of Ayodhya and when he would not, he ruled the kingdom as his brother's regent, placing his sandals on the throne. All the brothers had inherited a common sense of ethics and values and acted according to the highest traditions of those values.

My own brother Kumbhakarna too followed the traditions of loyalty to his king and brother. Ravana had looked after him and it was his duty to fight and die for him in an emergency. So, Kumbhakarna went to his death, to fulfil the debt he owed to his brother and for the sake of preserving his honour as a warrior. Only I was torn between my duty to my brother and my duty to my conscience. Even my duty to my brother, I saw in a different light. I felt it was my duty to prevent him from the folly of destroying the entire Rakshasa race because of his mad lust for a virtuous woman.

For, I too loved my brother and my country; was loyal and obedient to the very end. When he ill-treated the Rishis and humiliated the Devas, I did not object. I followed my own path of virtue, offered oblations to the gods, read the scriptures, practised the virtues of continence and charity and went my way. But it is true that though I did not take part in my brother's cruelties and oppression, I enjoyed the benefits of the wealth he had acquired through those activities.

Now, I wonder, should I not have protested at his policy, both on ethical as well as political grounds? If he went on like that, it was inevitable that the Devas who had been humiliated and the Rishis whose meditations and peaceful existence had been disturbed should join together to plot his downfall. Knowing how he must have offended the gods by his arrogant behaviour, it was also inevitable that the gods should come to their rescue. I knew and felt all this and yet was silent. Future generations will no doubt ask, why? I am now asking myself the same question and trying to search my heart for an answer. Was it because I was afraid of my brother who tolerated no criticism and thought he was infallible? Did I in my heart of hearts—as a Rakshasa by blood—rejoice in the exploits of my brother? Did the wealth and prosperity he brought to Lanka blind me to the folly of his behaviour? All I can say is this. There were many occasions when I wanted to speak, to tell him that he was wrong, that the wealth and the women he had appropriated were poison. I wanted to beg and plead with him. But, somehow in the chorus

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of praise that was showered on him by his ministers and chieftains, by even his sons and wives, I could not be the lone voice of dissent. Of course, my protest would have been of no use. It might possibly have got me into trouble. But these factors should not have prevented me from raising my voice against injustice. And yet, I kept my mouth shut, accepted the new palace that was built for me, and all the luxuries that went with it. Was it lack of courage, or lack of conviction, or a mere weakness of the will? Frankly, I do not know.

But that did not mean I accepted the situation. The conflict between love for my brother, country and clan on the one hand, and hatred of the things he was doing on the other, went on inside me, each incident adding a little more fuel to the fire within, but I was still unable to protest. When finally, I did protest, it was perhaps too late. Ravana was, by then, incapable of taking advice. He had become a god in his own way. I was accused of plotting his downfall and unceremoniously thrown out.

Some people might say I was biding my time. They would point out that I did not speak in the past only because I had no strong ally capable of challenging Ravana, and the moment I saw someone of that calibre, I was ready to speak. All I can say is that never for a moment did I consciously think of ruling the kingdom in my brother's place. In any case, if anything had happened to him, his sons or Kumbhakarna would have succeeded to the throne, not I.

It is of course easy to say that I should have expressed my views at a very early stage, and if necessary, left the country so that I would have had no part in what followed afterwards. It is easy to be wise after the event. It was a difficult and unusual situation no other individual had ever been faced with such a difficult choice.

Another factor that is often used against me is that while Rama's brothers were put to considerable hardship as a result of their decisions, I inherited a kingdom as a result of mine. If I had been killed in the war, or if Ravana had won the war and then executed me as a traitor, perhaps I would have received greater sympathy and understanding. The world is ever ready to offer its pity to a man who has suffered for his choice, even if he is a villain; that is, say, whatever his faults, he has paid the price. But the world is always suspicious of a man who had gained anything even in the cause of righteousness. Perhaps the suspicion thrown on me by Ravana in a moment of passion and repeated by that misguided soldier on the night of my coronation, will stick to me for ever, not because I was wrong, but because I won a kingdom. Yet I too have paid my price. When Kumbhakarna's head was severed

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when I lit Ravana's funeral pyre and when I clasped the dead body of dear Taruni to my breast, I paid the full price of my convictions.

Apart from my personal responsibility, other questions are also beginning to haunt my mind. From the very beginning, I was motivated by a passion for virtue and justice. My main interest was in the things of the spirit. I was moved by pity and I had sympathy for the weak and the unfortunate. And yet, in trying to eliminate evil, how much cruelty did we inflict on our enemies? How many innocent people were killed as a result of our undoubtedly well-intentioned efforts? On the pretext of establishing righteousness on earth, how much sorrow and misery did we bring about? In fighting the war to its tragic conclusion, we had to resort to every kind of guile and deceit. If we did not practise magic, it was only because I was not adept at it, not because we did not want to make use of it. Now, I wonder, is this the way of destroying the evil and preserving the good? And finally, after all the destruction and the misery we brought about, did we really establish Rama Rajya, the rule of Righteousness, on earth? Evil seems to thrive just as much now as before, though perhaps not in such a grand manner as in Ravana's time. That is not because people are better, but only because they do not think on the same grand scale as Ravana.

Further, as time goes on and the old Rakshasas die out, I find that new races of Rakshasas are coming up, with new kinds of cruelties and tortures. As the old magic is forgotten, new kinds of magic have taken their place. These new Rakshasas cannot even be recognised like the old Rakshasas, by their physical features. The cruelties of Ravana were simple and straightforward. It was easy to recognise them, even if it was dangerous to oppose them. But the cruelties and the torments of the new breeds of Rakshasas are difficult to recognise, because they are subtle and more complicated. They often take the form of benefits and even good deeds. But for all that, they poison the mind and deaden the spirit. To tell the difference between right and wrong and between a Rakshasa and a human is getting more and more difficult, even impossible to one like myself, whose mind is essentially simple. In this situation, I can only abdicate my functions, disappear into the forest and meditate, like the rishis of the past.

It is said in our holy books that when evil predominates over the good in any age, Vishnu the creator is born into this world to destroy the evil and preserve the good. Sri Rama was the seventh of such incarnations. We are now waiting for the tenth and the final one. But I wonder whether one incarnation every few thousand years is enough to destroy all the evil that accumulates over that period, not only in the physical

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world, but essentially in the minds of men. An incarnation of Vishnu today will have to spend a considerable amount of time in trying to sort out the evil from the good. The situation becomes more complex when good and evil are both present in the same individual.

It seems to me that this conflict between good and evil is not only eternal, but continuous. It is not so much between Rakshasas and humans as between one temperament and another, the diabolical and the ethical. Unfortunately, there are good and bad people having both temperaments. Even in my time, we had good people like Virabahu and my own beloved Taruni fighting for Ravana. If it were so then, it is much more complicated today. What is necessary is not just an avatar every few thousand years, but a series of avatars in every generation to see that the diabolical temperament is kept in check. And just as in my time, they will have to depend on a number of Vibhishanas, ready to make the right choice between their loyalties and their conscience, for their success. These Vibhishanas will have a more difficult job than I ever had, since issues will not be so clear-cut. But they will have to play their role with the full knowledge that they will always be suspect. In them, I will live, for I am deathless.

4

The tragedy of my life is made more poignant by the fact that I was granted the gift of everlasting life. When it was first granted to me, I was perhaps the happiest man on earth. To live for ever and ever, to know everything that is going to happen and be there when it does, to reject salvation that everyone aspires for and to prefer eternal service, it was something that no one had been granted before. I was immensely pleased about it all. But as the years went on, I have found life to be monotonous. People make the same mistakes again and again. While in the short term, things seem to be changing and moving, in the long term, they are really going round in a circle. From the point of view of eternity, one can only contemplate the futility and the meaninglessness of everything.

Those who live a normal span of life can lead a blameless one, do good deeds, perform sacrifices, propitiate the gods, and after a series of births and deaths, can hope for heaven and ultimate salvation. Those who are wicked and defy the laws of Man and God, will rot in hell. But I am beginning to realise that for a person like myself who has been blessed with everlasting life, there is no hope of heaven and no fear of hell. And what is more important, there is no ultimate salvation. My heaven and hell are on this earth. Heaven is the luxury of following one's conscience however much it may cost

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in terms of happiness and contentment for oneself and for others; and hell is the sacrifice of love at the altar of one's conscience and the suspicion cast on one by the world for being selfish. So, I have the bleak prospect of contemplating and living in this heaven and hell of my own seeking for all eternity.

I have lately begun to wonder what is meant by this gift of everlasting life. Why was I chosen for this gift and not anyone else? For, though I asked for it and it was granted, I now know that I was merely a tool and the words were more or less put into my mouth just as my brother Kumbhakarna's tongue faltered and asked for sleep instead of all-conquering weapons as he had originally intended. Gods have a way of achieving their purpose through earthly agencies, and I have a feeling that I was merely an instrument in the hands of providence for achieving some divine purpose.

What can this purpose be? Living the life of an old Rakshasa for ever and ever, being a burden on one's descendants and a nuisance to everyone else, knowing that I can never die and therefore, never truly live—all this is futile and meaningless. Surely, my physical survival cannot be the divine purpose for which I was granted this gift. Thinking on these problems for years and years, I have come to the conclusion that it is not so much my personal life that is eternal but rather the conflict I represent and the ideas I portray. I am the first to have faced this conflict of loyalties, to be torn apart by divided allegiances and to have had to decide on a course of action that would be suspect by one side or the other, and often by both. In fact, whatever course of action I had pursued, I would have been criticised. I am the first of that breed of people who are destined to face ideological conflicts within themselves and be blamed by either side for being a traitor.

So, when I talk of the gift of everlasting life, it is not so much a personal gift as a symbolic one. It is what I represent that is eternal—not so much my physical life—the struggle between the selfish desire of the flesh and the demands of the spirit, between the transitory and the permanent, between what one considers the right course of action and the bonds of the flesh that pull in the opposite direction. It is this struggle that started within me that is god's eternal gift and everlasting burden for humanity. Countless individuals in the future will face such conflicts and they will have to choose between what they consider to be right and wrong and what society considers is right. In this matter of personal choice, many selfish men will pretend to be idealists and many idealists will appear selfish. Men will sacrifice their lives for what they consider

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There is, indeed, a spiritual influence in the early morning hour, a divine silence and an inexpressible repose, and he who, purposeful and strong, throws off the mantle of ease and climbs the hills to greet the morning sun will thereby climb no inconsiderable distance up the hills of blessedness and truth.

The right beginning of the day will be followed by cheerfulness at the morning meal, permeating the household with a sunny influence; and the tasks and duties of the day will be undertaken in a strong and confident spirit, and the whole day will be well lived.

—James Allen

to be right and others will commit murder for what they consider noble ends. So far, we have had only conflicts for self-interest or for honour. The great struggle between Rama and Ravana was perhaps the first war based on what might be described as ideological considerations. But, in future, conflicts of self-interest will be replaced by ideological wars. Each generation will perhaps produce its own crop of ideologies and its own crop of conflicts and out of these conflicts will rise new gods and new ideals. While the gods as well as ideologies may change from age to age, the principle of the conflict itself will be permanent. Men will kill and die for such ideologies more enthusiastically than they will in their own self-interest. But in each of these conflicts there will be a few Vibhishanas, trying to reconcile their clash of loyalties and conscience.

So, when Brahma gave me the gift of everlasting life, he ensured, not so much my physical survival as the freedom of universal choice between right and wrong based on individual conscience. He also ensured the survival of the courage and the sacrifice necessary to take a decision on that choice and stick to it, however much it might cost. If I have one supreme satisfaction, it is that I initiated this process of choice among men.

When Ravana used to tell me that a life of eternity or even complete fulfilment would lead to boredom, I thought he was merely being jealous of me. But I am now beginning to think that he was perhaps right after all. Perhaps it was boredom that drove him to fight Rama and achieve a new kind of fame and death rather than the pointless life he was leading in Lanka. But I have no such dramatic end to look forward to; I have in fact, no end.

(Concluded)

Troubled or still, water is always water. What difference can embodiment or disembodiment make to the Liberated? Whether calm or in tempest, the sameness of the Ocean suffers no change.

Yogavasistha

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We Must Learn to Die

अहन्यहनि भूतानि गच्छन्ति यममन्दिरम् ।
शेषास्थावरमिच्छन्ति किमाश्चर्यं ततः परम् ।।

(महाभारतम्)

Everyday, and day after day, animals and human beings are passing out of life, but we do not think of death; we think we shall never die. What can be more wonderful than this?

— The Mahabharatha

D. Raja Ganesan

THERE is an asymmetry in our attitudes towards the two termini of existence—birth and death. As the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer rightly points out there are a thousand and one studies about our state after death but practically none about our state before birth. Nevertheless from the cosmic perspective both of them are equally significant.

The psychiatrist Jung points out that our mind must be ready to follow the curve of life. As we begin the inexorable decline into the vale of years we must gracefully accept it. We must be ready to die with life. And Dr. John Hinton, from his experience as a doctor, concludes that many terminally ill patients show a 'perfect willingness' to die before the loss of consciousness.

Psychiatrists also hold that a person even during the prime of his life can learn to accept the significance and inevitability of his death. Of course the intellectual acknowledgement of the idea comes much earlier than the total acceptance of its significance and emotional acquiescence. As Kierkegaard describes it, a man may pound his fists and stamp his feet in token of his cognitive acknowledgement. But it is no guarantee that he will accept death if it suddenly becomes imminent.

In almost all the cultures the world over, children are usually shut out from the two great mysterious termini of existence: birth (sex) and death. Thanks to Freud the mental hygiene aspect of sex education has come to be recognised. Research studies and clinical experience indicate that death

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too must be treated similarly. In our own mythology the story of Rishya Sringar and the legend of the Buddha attest to the early recognition in our culture of the need for a symmetrical treatment as between birth and death. As the legend goes, the Buddha did not know of death till he was twenty nine years of age. When he was confronted with the phenomenon so late in life the shock of its revelation made him renounce and run away from his regal life. His personality underwent a serious disorientation.

The psychiatrist Herman Feifel found that physicians were more afraid of death than people very like them in other walks of life, and—it is really surprising—their own patients! What the study indicates is that mere exposure to the phenomenon of death will not make people adapt themselves to it. What is required is "guided" experience through death-situations.

Historically attitudes in the face of the fear of death have fallen into two major divisions: affirmation of immortality and acceptance of mortality. Again, the mortalists range from the epicureans through the stoics, the evolutionists and the meliorist-pragmatists to the existentialists.

'Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may die' is the familiar response of the epicureans in the face of the fear of death. Extreme but deliberately cultivated indifference to the vicissitudes of existence, including the inevitability of its termination, characterises the stoics. Neither of the schools have been able to conquer the fear of death completely. The pragmatists and evolutionists may be grouped together as escapists. The pragmatists hold that amelioration of the conditions of living will mitigate the fear of death. The extreme version is the revival of the ancient dictum, 'while I am, death is not and while death is, I am not'. They are vulnerable to the criticism of Nietzche that denial of death robs the majesty of man—both when he is living and when he dies. The shallowness of this attitude is be-

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trayed in the treatment of death not as a tragedy but as a dramatic illusion in pragmatic cultures.

The evolutionists—biological as well as socio-historical—subscribe to the doctrine of the dissolution of the individual personality at death. But they take refuge in the phenomenon of biological and/or social continuity.

The desire to perpetuate the memory of one's own existence seems to be near universal. In fact Toynbee says history can be fruitfully studied from the perspective of death: the strivings of all historic personalities are nothing but attempts at transcending death in some form or other. Smaller fries are no exemption to this desire: the wills men leave behind are nothing but the manifestation of the desire to stamp an imprint—however small and faint —on the flux of time. It is rarely that a man chimes with Alexander Pope who said:

Unknown, unlamented let me die

Not a stone tell where I lie.

But the device of biological and/or social continuity too has been found to be wanting in offering a satisfactory solution to the problem of death. The trajectory of Shakespeare's career, it is said, starts from his sonnets, with a search for an answer to the problem of death through biological continuity. Not satisfied with this answer, it is further said, Shakespeare moved on to the great tragedies.

The existentialists advocate acceptance of "death without consolation". Kierkegaard and Heidegger want everyone to live always in the light of death. But Kierkegaard fortunately made the leap of faith into religion whereas Heidegger has made 'death without consolation' a major concern of his philosophy. There is much to commend in this attitude. But how far is it feasible to maintain life at this level of intensity? Again, this attitude shuts out the channels of immortality like biological and social continuity that seem to be available in nature—however partial and imperfect they may be.

What are the factors that condition the attitude to death? The stability of society, the cultural setting and the life-experiences of the individual are some of the major determinants of the attitude to death. There are many interweaving factors in the determinants: age of the person, religious orientation, psychological maturity and level of threat are the more significant ones among them.

The factor of religious orientation calls for special comment. There are, as Toynbee says, three levels of attitude in this matter: the real attitude of the person, what the person perceives to be his attitude and the attitude he gives expression to.

Hume, the sceptic and Dr. Johnson, the literary critic were con-

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temporaries in the 18th century. Dr. Johnson, a believing christian, was notoriously terrified of dying. The sceptic Hume had, on the other hand, the most balanced attitude towards his own end. (He died slowly of chronic diarrhoea). He neither avoided the topic when the conversation naturally led to it nor dwelt at length on it to parade his cheerful and heroic attitude. When his physician, Dr. Dundas, sought to make an encouraging report to his friend, Hume asked him but to tell the truth: that he was dying as fast as his enemies, if he had any, could wish and as easily as his best friends could desire.

How do children acquire the concept of death? The psychiatrist Maria Nagy divides it into three stages:

The first stage is from the ages three to five when the child perceives no distinction between the animate and the inanimate.

The second stage is between the ages five to nine when death is personified and is felt as remote and as not inevitable.

The third stage is the recognition of death as the physical end of life. This falls in the ages between nine and twelve.

What is the spectrum of attitudes in the face of imminent death? In other words, how does a high level of threat influence the attitude to death? Elizabeth Kubler Ross made a study of terminally ill patients of blood cancer. These patients had been told about the fatal nature of their illness and kept in a separate ward. Ross says, "The dying are the best teachers about death". She made clinical case-studies of them. She describes the changing spectrum of their attitude as follows:

Shock, Denial, Anger, Depression, Bargaining (with God), Acceptance and Decathexis. Hope overarches the stages from Denial to Acceptance.

Of course there was a good deal of overlapping and regressive cycles in the spectrum of attitudes but this broad pattern was dominant.

Probably these are also the stages through which any and every individual goes in arriving at a mature attitude towards death. Of course there are bound to be modifications appropriate to the fact that in the majority of the cases death does not come threatening in a determinate deadline.

How to guide a child in acquiring a sane attitude towards death? Encouraging the child to rear pets, evidently those animals that have a short span of life, not screening him from death when this occurs in the family and helping him to express his grief and participate in the rituals will help him absorb the shock of death, achieve reintegration with life and accept the fact of his own ultimate death. Rituals, in the opinion of the sociologist Talcott Parsons are the social mechanisms that canalise the expression of grief within a permissible range and help the

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living reintegrate and resume their lives with the minimal disruption.

In formal education, biology can give a little more emphasis on death. History—especially topics on tyrants and savants—can be dealt with from the perspective of death. And finally nothing like the great classical tragedies of literature to hammer across the meaning of life and the significance of death.

But how exactly does death take place? At the cellular level, ageing and death are sought to be explained by what has come to be called "Error Theory". Since DNA and protein synthesis within a molecule can never be perfect some errors creep into the cell and hence in the organism. These errors would build up slowly at first but then accelerate leading to senescence and to "error catastrophe" which would result in death. This is said to be the theory with a relatively strong empirical data support.

At the molar level, there seem to be two alternative theories: deficiency theory and abdicatory theory.

Deficiency theory holds that death occurs due to the deprivation and/or deficiency in the supply of certain elements to the metabolic process. Philosophically this theory has a materialistic affiliation. This is possibly also the strictly scientific-physiological view. It is an explicitly formulated theory too.

The other theory, namely the abdicatory theory, is imbedded in literature. It has some, though relatively less strong, empirical base and is yet to be explicitly formulated. Philosophically it has an idealistic affiliation. Baldly stated, it means that death is not a function of the material environment but of the decision of the mind.

Among primitive tribes a phenomenon called 'voodoo' death has been investigated. A person is predicted by a necromancer that he would die on a specific day. The prediction is confirmed though autopsy reveals no medically detectible aetiology.

In the U.S. the age of the onset of senescence in the organisms of a species has been hypothesised to be positively related with the average life-span for the species. It is being tested by an experiment with rats. Two colonies of rats—one in a highly accident-prone environment where the average life-span is short and the other in an accident-free and hygienic environment—are being reared to test out this hypothesis.

The Indian Statistical Institute made another study to test if the popular stories to the effect that seriously ill people hold on to life till a dear one turns up, and die immediately thereafter are true.

The method adopted was as follows: the date of birth and date of death of eminent personalities were studied. It was hypothesised that the more eminent a person was, the more capable he would be of holding on to his life till he

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crossed the next nearest birthday. That is, in the case of eminent men the gap between their last birthday (whilst they were alive) and the date of their death should be very short. And it was found to be statistically a tenable hypothesis in the case of men of first order eminence. It did not hold true in the case of less eminent men. In the case of Shakespeare it is said that he died on the very date of his birth.

Again, as the myth goes, Bhishma lay on a bed of arrows in Kurukshetra holding on to life, awaiting the onset of Uttarayana.

It is, in the words of D. H. Lawrence, as if each soul "issues its own ticket to death". These points favour the abdicatory theory.

But then, when do people feel ready to die? When they feel overwhelmed and powerless in their environment and when they do not entertain any hope of regaining such power in the future, people contemplate death. The second type of occasion is when they have accomplished something like the best in their lives. Both types of occasion have one thing in common: that is the person perceives that there is nothing for him to accomplish in his environment.

The *ashrama dharma* is a profoundly conceived scheme of living in rhythm with the ebb and flow of life towards death. When a man sees the son of his son he has done his duty by this world. It is time he left *grihasthasrama* behind and entered *vanaprastha* to ruminate on the meaning of existence. The rumination culminates in the realisation—to borrow a couplet from Shakespeare—

We are all such stuff as dreams are made of
And our little life is rounded with a sleep.

The next stage is that of a *jeevan muktha* for whom life and death are the same. He wanders in freedom like a skylark till his karma is spent. And death comes for him, as Kalidasa put it, like 'a welcome guest.' □□□

A man does not commence to truly live until he finds an immovable centre within himself on which to stand, by which to regulate his life, and from which to draw his peace. If he trusts to that which fluctuates he also will fluctuate; if he leans upon that which may be withdrawn he will fall and be bruised; if he looks for satisfaction in perishable accumulations he will starve for happiness in the midst of plenty.

Let a man learn to stand alone, looking to no one for support; expecting no favours, craving no personal advantages; not begging nor complaining, not craving nor regretting, but relying upon the truth within himself, deriving his satisfaction and comfort from the integrity of his own heart.

—James Allen

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A scene from a popular Yakshagaana

YAKSHAGAANA

CHETAN

A dance from that has helped to bring nearer to the heart of the common man India's ageless epics, Karnataka's Yakshagaana has much in common with Kerala's Kathakali and like it is heading for a revival.—*Ed.*

'YAKSHAGAANA' is a musical dance-drama of Karnataka that can justifiably occupy a pride of place among the folk-arts of the world. This great art which effectively mirrors the culture of this State has crossed its limited boundaries and attracted world-wide attention. It can be rated equal to dance forms like Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Manipuri and Odessey.

It is a rich and colourful theatrical form which depicts the stirring beauty of the coastal region of Karnataka, is played to vast audiences at night in the open air. Its traditions are aesthetically sound, and are sophisticated enough to require years of training of its performances.

Yakshagaana which has enraptured millions of Kannada-speaking people has been an effective and efficient medium in depicting through its dance and songs our ancient heritage, wisdom and culture. Yakshagaana is a harmonious confluence of music, literature and dance. Because it dramatises topics from our Puranas which are the very founts of our culture, it can be said that Yakshagaana is foremost also in the religious reawakening of our people.

'Thaala Maddale' and 'Bayalaata' are the two important types of Yakshagaana. In 'Thaala Maddale,' the artists sit on the stage and unfold the story in a dramatic way through conversation.

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Here there is no make-up and dance. Fluency of speech and literature are important. It requires, like 'Bayalaata,' the Bhagavatar (narrator) and background music. This system of Yakshagaana which incorporates in itself music and literature is very popular in the district of South Kanara. 'Bayalaata' on the other hand creates a world of fantasy by its music and dance, acting and speech, gorgeous dresses and background orchestra.

Kumbala (now a part of Kerala) and Brahmavar which are at the southern and northern ends of South Kanara respectively are the places which gave birth to Yakshagaana.

Paarthi Subba, an 18th century poet, is credited with originating Yakshagaana. Just as Siddhendra Yogi of Andhra is credited with originating Kuchipudi, it was Paarthi Subba who created a framework for Yakshagaana. His time and place are still matters of debate. Whatever that be, Paarthi Subba is entitled to the gratitude of countless generations of people for having devised a system which would bring the various and ageless values of human life even to the unlettered.

By enacting selected scenes from *Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata* etc., Yakshagaana has brought these great epics nearer to the heart of the common man and is a superior form of folk-art. It has an all-round beauty with its dress and make-up, dance and music, and literature and acting. This art in which music and drama predominate is called 'Yakshagaana' in the old Kannada literary works. In those days, Yakshagaana had, like other forms of art, the patronage of kings and religious heads. The various members of the Yakshagaana troupe like actors, narrators, heroes and instrumentalists were handsomely rewarded.

Yakshagaana which had been relegated to the background due to lack of patronage has of late prospered and made rapid strides. It has influenced persons of all strata of society. Many influential persons developed an interest in Yakshagaana and achieved proficiency in it. They reformed it by cleansing it of all undesirable things and gave it a scientific look. This folk-art of the village folk has today become the favourite of millions. "If such a thing as theatre is left today in Karnataka, it is for Yakshagaana," says Shri B. V. Karanth, the renowned artist director. It has even won the applause of foreigners that no folk-art in the world could equal Yakshagaana.

'Thenkuthittu' and 'Badagathittu' are the two regional variations of Yakshagaana. While the plays of 'Thenkuthittu' are known as 'Aata,' 'Bayalaata' and 'Dashavataara Aaata,' that of 'Badaguthittu' are called 'Aata,' 'Doddaata' and 'Bhagavatara Aaata.'

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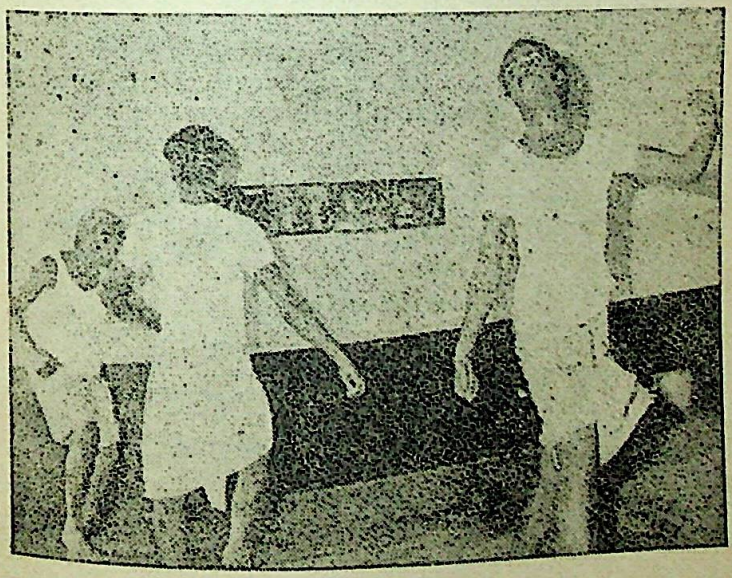
Though there are differences between these two systems in dialogues, dance, make-up, song and background music, there are many common factors which confirm that the two have a common origin. Singing by the Bhagavatar accompanied by 'Chande' and 'Maddale,' the actors acting their roles accompanied by dance during the singing and immediately after the singing, the actors speaking their bits in a loud and sonorous tone are some of the common characteristics of both the systems.

Yakshagaana, which is instrumental in the experiencing of different subtle moods and captivates and educates the people at large about our ancient heroes and culture, demands a rigorous regimen from its pupils like the Kathakali of Kerala. Kathakali and Yakshagaana have many things in common. The Thenkuthittu branch of Yakshagaana appears to have been more influenced by Kathakali. But Yakshagaana has many other characteristics by which it excels Kathakali.

Yakshagaana is today extending its sphere of influence beyond the national frontiers. Many Westerners are studying Yakshagaana in its very place of birth and are also trying to understand the heart of our puranas. Martha Austen of America who was captivated by this art studied it here and has plans to propagate it when back home.

Yakshagaana was resuscitated by the untiring efforts of Dr.

Training in progress at the Yakshagaana Kendra, Udipi



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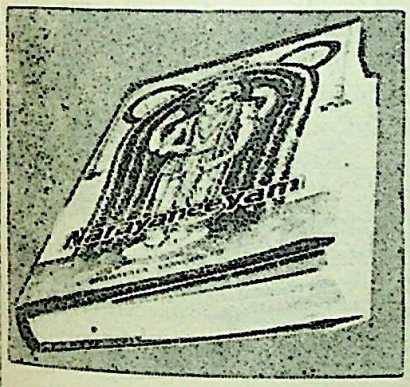
Shivarama Karanth, the celebrated writer and artist of Karnataka. He gave it international fame and recognition. This 'high priest' of Yakshagaana has studied its music in depth and has secured for it an everlasting place in the musical world of the country. He has studied it scientifically and put it on the path of reform and upheld its universal artistic values and shown to the world the pride of place it occupies among the classical dances of the country. Just as Kathakali became world famous by the efforts of Mahakavi Vallathol, Yakshagaana is claiming world attention by the willing and loving toil of Dr. Karanth.

For the first time in the history of Yakshagaana, training centres have been opened at Udipi and Dharmasthala (South Kanara) to impart traditional training and study. These centres are imparting training in the different aspects of Yakshagaana like dance, acting, gestures, dress, make-up, music, conversation and 'chande vaadana' with a view to preserving and nourishing this art. The day is not far off when Yakshagaana, the folk-art of Karnataka, becomes a World Art by its inherent greatness and beauty.

□ □ □



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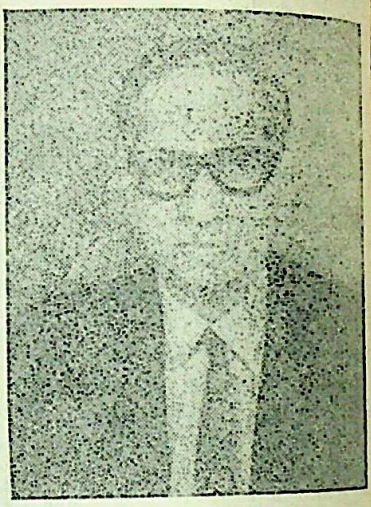
Dr. P. B. Gajendragadkar



Dr. Pralhad Balacharya Gajendragadkar, born March 16, 1901, presently Honorary Chairman of the Law Commission, New Delhi, has held many high offices with great distinction.

Called to the Bar in 1926, he became a judge of the Bombay High Court in 1945 and in 1964 was appointed the Chief Justice of India, which post he held till 1966.

Though Law has been his first love, Dr. Gajendragadkar is equally wedded to education and culture. Scion of a family of renowed Sanskritists, he has drunk deep at the inexhaustible fountain of our Vedas and Upanishads.

The number of educational and cultural institutions with which he is connected are too numerous to be mentioned. He was the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay. His outstanding knowledge in law and education prompted the Government of India to appoint him as the Chairman of the Jammu & Kashmir Commission of Enquiry and Chairman of the Banaras Hindu University Enquiry Committee.

During his visit to U.S.A. in 1965, at the invitation of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the U.S.A., he delivered a series of lectures on the Constitution of India at several leading universities in America. He represented India and spoke on her behalf at the Magna Carta Celebrations in London in 1965; was leader of the delegation of jurists to the Soviet Union, and also led another Indian delegation to the Commonwealth Conference at Australia. He also delivered the Gandhi Memorial Lecture at the invitation of the University College and Gandhi Memorial Academy, Nairobi.

Author of several publications in English and Sanskrit, Dr. Gajendragadkar is known for his catholicity of outlook and broad vision. Though deeply religious, he is totally free from bigotry.

The Bhavan is grateful to Dr. Gajendragadkar for accepting the General Editorship of the Bhavan's Project to publish "Critical Editions of the Upanishads."—Ed.

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HINDUISM

in Retrospect & Prospect-II

AS I SEE IT

DR. P. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR

THE Editor of the *Bhavan's Journal* has requested me to answer the questions set out in the Questionnaire drafted by him. It appears that the Questionnaire is primarily addressed to the religious heads; and that is natural, because all the questions formulated under the Questionnaire pertain to one aspect or another of Hindu Religion. I am not a religious head, nor can I claim to be a deep student of Hindu religion as such; that is one reason why I feel reluctant to honour the Editor's request.

There is another reason which adds to my reluctance and that is, the views I propose to express in my answers may sound untraditional and may not conform to the pattern of answers which the Editor is likely to receive from religious heads or other persons who have made a deep study of Hindu religion.

However, out of regard for the dedicated manner in which Sri S. Ramakrishnan is carrying on the work of the Bhavan in conformity with the guidelines laid down by his Guru Munshiji, I propose to set out my answers in brief.

In order to make my answers intelligible, I would like to take second part of Question 3, and Questions 15, 16 and 17 together by way of introduction.

Briefly stated, I believe that Hindu religion is not a religion in the traditional sense of the term. I have had occasion to consider this aspect of the matter, when I was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in *Shastri Yagnapurushdasji and Others* v. *Muldas Bhundardas Vaishya and Another* (A.I.R. 1966 Supreme Court 1119). I have also dealt with this aspect in my K.T. Telang Endowment Lectures 1971, on "Secularism and the Constitution of India." Let me state my view as briefly as I can.

In its traditional aspect, generally, every one of the recognised

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religions honours one prophet. It owes loyalty to a scripture which is regarded as authoritative by the followers of that religion. It has an agreed philosophic doctrine in which its followers believe. It has one specific view in spiritual or ethical matters to which its followers subscribe. Its individual and collective behavioural pattern conforms to norms accepted by all its followers, and it believes that its tenets. its philosophy, its religious concepts and its creed exclusively contain truth in its ultimate sense.

If these broad tests are applied to Hindu religion, it will not fall in the pattern of the traditional religions of the world. It is well-known that the question about the origin of the word 'Hindu' has given rise to a difference of opinion amongst indologists. According to Monier Williams, the great oriental scholar, "That part of the great Aryan race which immigrated from Central Asia, through the mountain passes into India, settled first in the districts near the river Sindhu (now called the Indus). The Persians pronounced this word Hindu and named their Aryan brethren Hindus. The Greeks, who probably gained their first ideas of India from the Persians, dropped the hard aspirate and called the Hindus 'Indoi'.*

If Hinduism were to be treated as a religion in the traditional sense, how does one define Hinduism? Does it believe in one philosophic concept? The answer is 'No'

The monistic idealism, which can be said to be the most distinguishing feature of Hinduism, has been expressed in four different forms: (1) Non-dualism or Advaitism; (2) Pure monism; (3) Modified Monism; and (4) Implicit Monism.

Does Hinduism believe in the worship of one idol? The answer is: not only does Hinduism not believe in the worship of one single idol, but there are some sects of Hindus, whose religion must be characterised as Hinduism, which do not believe in the worship of any idol at all.

In this context, it is necessary to bear in mind that, according to the Constitution, Explanation II to Article 25(2), the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jaina or Buddhist religions, and the reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly. My statement that some sections of the Hindu community do not believe in the worship of any idol takes into account the fact that Hinduism in its broadest connotation includes Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and the religion followed by Lingayats as well.

Even where Hindus worship idols, their concept of God has changed from time to time. In the Vedic period, the Hindus worshipped gods representing natural phenomena, e.g., Indra, Varuna, Vi-

* *Hinduism* by Monier Williams, p. 1.

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and Agni. Later, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh took their place. Later still, a large number of gods were conceived and became the objects of worship by different groups in different parts of India.

Do Hindus conform to one single or at least similar behavioural pattern in their individual or collective life? Do all of them believe in the performance of certain religious rites? Are they all vegetarians or non-vegetarians? Do their religious customs and rites give an impression of identity or similarity? The answer to all these questions again is in the negative.

As Max Muller, the great Sanskrit scholar, has observed: "The longer I have studied the various systems, the more have I become impressed with the truth of the view taken by Vijnanabhiksu and others that there is behind the variety of the six systems a common fund of what may be called national or popular philosophy, a large *manasa* (lake) of philosophical thought and language far away in the distant North and in the distant past from which each thinker was allowed to draw for his own purposes."*

Does Hinduism treat any line of thought as heresy and the advocates of that thought as heretics? The answer is 'No'. Even Charvak is a Hindu and is not treated as falling outside the Hindu community.

Buddha was the first dissenting revolutionary against the ritualism which thrived in the period of Brahmanas and which saw the supremacy of the priestly class. He evolved his own philosophy, preached it in the language which the common men understood, and started a religious sect of his own; and yet, in course of time, Buddha was adored by the Hindus as the incarnation of God. His theory of Shunyavad which made an impressive impact on the minds of the elite in the contemporary world was taken up by Sankara, the great Hindu scholar and saint, and was in substance given the form of Mayavada which became a part of Hindu philosophy. Mahavir played a similar role of a great dissenter, founded his philosophy and, in consequence, Jainism was born.

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, likewise, started a sect of his own and was a great dissenter and, yet, his followers are Hindus and he is respected by all the Hindus, whether they are Sikhs or not. Basava is another great dissenter who started the Lingayat religion, preached doctrines of his own and, yet, later, he became a part of the great personages whom all Hindus respected.

It is in the light of this concept that the significance and spiritual aspect of exalted persons like Swami Dayanand, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda has to be assessed.

* *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* by Max Muller, p. xvii.

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Does not the *Bhagavad Gita* also proclaim that

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥
—*Gita*, IV. 7.

This doctrine explains how great dissenters like Buddha, Mahavir, Nanak and Basava came to be honoured and their philosophies became a part of Hinduism and their followers Hindus.

This behavioural pattern of the Hindu community is attributable to the doctrine in the *Bhagavad Gita* that, wherever there is a spark of excellence in a person, there Divinity partially resides.

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंऽशसंभवम् ॥
—*Gita*, X-41.

Dissenters who protested against the contemporary notions, practices and religious rites were not treated as heretics, but the creeds founded by them were ultimately absorbed as parts of Hinduism itself. The common characeristic feature of the revolt represented by these Dissenters was that they all disapproved of Brahminical supremacy and of the performance of sacrifices, treated the Shudras and women as equal with men, debarred no one from participating in spiritual and ethical education and learning, and preached their doctrines not in Sanskrit as the Vedic religion did, but in the language which the common people understood. The monopoly of Brahma Vidya which was claimed by priestly class in Vedic and Vedic period was broken by Dissenters and the philosophic cept of Hinduism as preached them was carried to the doors of the ignorant masses in the temporary world.

Another feature of Hinduism that Hinduism does not believe proselytization for the simple son that Hinduism believes in profound truth that, though is one, wise men describe it ently:

एकं सद्विप्राः बहुधा वदन्ति

This is how Gandhiji expre this distinguishing feature Hindu philosophy:

"Even as a tree has a trunk, but many branches leaves, so there is one true perfect Religion, but it beco many, as it passes through human medium. I recognise God except the God that is found in the hearts of the millions. They do not recog his presence; I do. And I wor the God that is Truth, or Tr which is God, through the ser of these millions".*

Similarly, Toynbee has obse ed:

"The fundamental positive tive for toleration is a recogn of the truth that religious out is not just a nuisance but is a It is sinful because it arouses wild beast in Human Nature. ligious persecution, too, is si because no one has a right to to stand between another hu

* *Harijan*, 11 March 1939, C from S. Radhakrishnan (e *Mahatma Gandhi*, George A & Unwin Ltd.

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soul and God. Every soul has a right to commune with God in God's and this soul's way; and the particular way concerns none but God and the particular soul in question. No other human being has a right to intervene by the use of any means except non-violent missionary action. And violence in this field is not only sinful; it is futile; for religions cannot be inculcated by force. There is no such thing as a belief that is not held voluntarily through a genuinely spontaneous inner conviction. Different people's convictions will differ, because Absolute Reality is a mystery of which no more than a fraction has ever yet been penetrated by—or been revealed to—any human mind. 'The heart of so great a mystery cannot ever be reached by following one road only'. However strong and confident may be my conviction that my own approach to the mystery is a right one, I ought to be aware that my field of spiritual vision is so narrow that I cannot know that there is no virtue in other approaches. In theistic terms this is to say that I cannot know that other people's visions may not also be revelations from God —and these perhaps fuller and more illuminating revelations than the one that I believe that I myself have received from him."*

Tilak realised the full significance of this progressive aspect of Hinduism and, therefore, defined Hinduism in these words:

प्रामाण्यबुद्धिर्वेदेषु साधनामनेकता।
उपास्यानामनियमश्चैतद्धर्मस्य लक्षणम्॥

This illustrates how complex even the great Tilak found to define Hinduism. The fact that Hinduism defies any attempt to put it in the straight-jacket of a traditional definition is indeed its strength and its glory. That is why I do not think it is possible or even desirable that the different philosophic concepts enumerated in question 16 should come together and seek to bring about a synthesis acceptable to all of them. One has merely to read the Bhashya writings of Sankara, Ramanuja, Vallabha and Madhva to realise how they criticise each others' views in carping though dignified language to be satisfied that any attempt to bring about a consensus would be futile and would, in a sense, weaken the very character of the comprehensive approach and outlook of Hindu religion.

Radhakrishnan has described Hinduism as a broad, comprehensive, progressive, forward-looking way of life. I respectfully share Radhakrishnan's view and so, I believe that Hinduism is not a religion in the traditional sense of the term. This belief leads to my optimistic conclusion that the future of Hinduism is bound to be glorious. I often feel Hinduism is like a वटवृक्ष (banyan tree) broad and expansive and eternally young. It is in the light of this view that I propose to answer the remaining questions.

1. Is the influence of religion over the masses on the wane? If not, how can corruption and such other pointers to widespread dete-

* Arnold Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, Oxford University Press, London, 1956, pp. 250-1.

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rioration in ethical and moral values be accounted for?

1. I do not think that the influence of religion over the masses has waned. For the presence of ever-increasing corruption and such other pointers to widespread deterioration in ethical and moral values, one will have to examine in depth the sociological, economic and political factors contributing to this unfortunate result. So far as the masses are concerned, I am inclined to believe that, by and large, the influence of religion over their minds cannot be said to be distinctly on the wane.

2. The traditional charge against Hinduism is that it is fatalistic, that it inhibits progress by making people slaves to the belief in the inevitability of whatever is to happen. How far is this charge true? If false, how can the stigma be removed? What is the basis for such an accusation which is being advanced even today by well-meaning, highly educated people?

2. The traditional charge against Hinduism that it is fatalistic is partly true, because it arises out of a complete misunderstanding of the theory of rebirth in which some sects of Hindus believe, as well as the theory of 'Karma'. The theory of Karma postulates 'karma' in a two-fold form—Krita and Krityaman—and the proper appreciation of the mutual working of Karma, past and present, should not lead to fatalism. But in the popular mind, the theory of Karma is comple misunderstood, and that does to make many Hindus fatalis

3. It is said that the gre strength of Hinduism is its c licity, breadth of outlook, but this is also its greatest weakne that there is very little com prescribed religious observa obligatory for all, *as in other r gions. Is it necessary and pos to outline certain basic mini observances for all Hindus?*

3. (Part I.): In order to rem this fatalistic approach wh makes men and women conte with whatever happens to them the present life, the proper s tion is to explain the basic c cept of Karma and rebirth. Max Muller once observed, H dus are the only race who bel that they are mere sojourners this world; their eternal home in the Heaven. This, in my vi may be true about the ignora masses, but cannot be said to true about Hinduism prope understood. If Hinduism had b static and fatalistic, the whole h tory of the Aryans entering In and making it their land would have been possible. But, in l times, the basic features of t pristine creed of Hinduism c to be misunderstood and that, doubt, witnessed its deteriorat in the beliefs so far as the mass are concerned. I do not think it necessary to outline certain ba minimum observances for all H dus. For one thing, if we bear mind that the word 'Hindu'

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cludes not only Hindus, popularly so called, but also Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs, it would be futile to make any such attempt. Besides, such an attempt is not necessary either to evoke the spiritual ethos in the minds of all Hindus.

4. Even a well-read, widely travelled and enlightened Editor like the late Shri Frank Moraes equated Hindu ethos with casteism. Will the fundamental values of Hinduism be in any way affected by the eradication of casteism towards which a concerted effort is being made now at all levels? If Harijans who constitute a sizeable population among Hindus are made to feel that their very religion exposes them to ridicule, how are they to love that religion? In other words, how can all sections of Hindus be made to take equal interest and have the same sense of belonging to Hindu religion?

4. The view of the well-read, widely-travelled and enlightened Editor like Frank Moraes which equated the Hindu ethos with casteism, is based, with respect, on a superficial impression formed by him by the behavioural pattern of Hindus of today. I concede that castes and sub-castes as well as the doctrine of Untouchability, which are after-growths of Hinduism in its degenerated times, do make that impression on the minds of non-Hindus; but to equate the Hindu ethos with casteism is doing injustice to the basic concept of Hindu philosophy and its permanent ethos which alone makes it progressive and dynamic and accounts for its existence during more than 5,000 years.

5. Swami Vivekananda has given a positive suggestion that one of the best ways for Harijans to command respect among all sections of people is to learn Sanskrit, the study of which is being neglected even by Brahmins today. What incentives can be given to Harijans to learn Sanskrit, the repository of Indian culture and religion?

5. Swami Vivekananda's suggestion that the best way for Harijans to command respect is to learn Sanskrit was, no doubt, well-meant and may, to a certain extent, help; but, with utmost respect to Swamiji, I do not think that the study of Sanskrit by Harijans would better their lot or would help to remove the blot of untouchability which has disgraced the Hindu behavioural pattern throughout the ages. It is sociological, economic and political factors which introduced this pernicious and reprehensible practice of untouchability; and its removal cannot be achieved merely if Harijans studied Sanskrit. Education of the masses in the matter of the true concept of Hinduism would, however, be of considerable help. Indeed, social education of this type is the only effective way of achieving the desired result.

Besides, for learning Sanskrit, Harijans would be entitled to ask:

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What is the motivation? Unfortunately, Sanskrit learning is already on the decline, and the decline is becoming faster tragically enough after we became free; and so, in the context of today, to ask the Harijans to learn Sanskrit will not only not serve the noble purpose which Swamiji had in mind, but might be grossly misunderstood by the Harijans themselves.

6. It is said that while the "Srutis" embody the eternal truths of Hinduism, the "Smritis" which embody rules of conduct need to be revised according to the dictates of the changing times. Will such a stand be acceptable to all sections of Hindus? If so, how can new "Smritis" come into being and who will give them sanction and sanctity?

6. If "Srutis" mentioned in Question 6 include the *Bhagavad Gita,* the *Brahma Sutras* and the Upanishads, they undoubtedly embody the eternal truth of Hinduism in which a large number of Hindus believe, though I must hasten to add that so far as the followers of Buddha, Guru Nanak, Basava and Mahavir are concerned, my statement may not be true.

"Smritis" embody a large number of topics including rules of conduct and principles of law. I am afraid, no useful purpose would be served by revising the Smritis to meet the challenge of times. Part of that task will have to be left to legislators in the context of today.

7. Hinduism has always ... newed or revitalised itself acc... ing to the needs of times. ... today's context, are any con... tives called for? If so, who ... bring them about and how ... they be brought about and ... acceptable to the masses?

7. It is perfectly true that H... duism has always revitalised ... according to the needs of ... times. When I think of the ... history of the progress of H... duism, I often feel tempted ... compare Hinduism with the ma... tic stream of Bhagirathi which ... flown for ages and is consta... changing and yet, it does not ... pear to change. Even today, ... process is on, though deplora... slow, and Hinduism is underg... changes to meet the challeng... the present times. But the cha... are now effected not by the ... ters of Nibandhas or Smritis, ... by legislators and by enlighte... public opinion.

8. In the Kali Yuga, Bh... has been described as the ... suitable and easiest of paths ... God-realisation. Yet, how is ... that Vedantic teachings with th... accent on Jnana *are being gi... the pride of place by ... savants?*

8. In regard to Bhakti being ... most suitable and easiest path ... God-realisation, it is only par... true and, as the *Bhagavad G...* shows, it is the combination ... Jnana, Bhakti and Karma wh... lead to God-realisation.

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9. Is a guru essential for one to enter the spiritual path and attain the goal? How does one recognise one's Guru?

9. I am not competent to answer this question.

10. Will "Mantras" lose their sanctity if they are not in Sanskrit?

10. I do not think 'Mantras' will lose their sanctity if they are not in Sanskrit. It is the content of the Mantras which makes an impact on human minds and not the language which is the vehicle of the Mantras. Besides, the religious principles enunciated by Buddha, Guru Nanak, Basava and Mahavir cannot be said to lack sanctity because they are not in Sanskrit. In fact, they can claim more sanctity, because they appealed to a much larger section of the community unlike Mantras which were available only to the elite of the contemporary world.

11. Are fasting and such other dietary regulations necessary for leading a spiritual life?

11. Though I am unable to answer this question with any degree of certainty, I may hasten to express the view that fasting and such other dietary regulations may serve the purpose of controlling human mind and emotions and help the process of discipline; but they cannot be said to be indispensable for spiritual life.

12. What is the role of rituals in religion? Are they to be discouraged as is being advocated by some reformists? Or are they to be encouraged? If so, in what form?

12. The role of rituals in religion is, in my view, very minor in the context of today. I would not discourage its continuance nor encourage it, but leave its fate to the forces of the times.

13. There are various Samskaras prescribed in the life of a Hindu right from his birth to death. Many of these "Samskaras" are not being observed today. Should they be revived?

13. The non-observance of Samskaras as prescribed by Smritis does not cause me any concern and I would not be interested in reviving them. Samskaras are bound to change from time to time and cannot conform to the pattern fixed several ages ago.

14. It is said that the "Karma Kanda" in the Vedas has almost gone out of use except for a few rites which remain in vogue for marriages, shraddhas etc. Is it advisable to revive the Karma Kanda with its stress on the performances of various Yagnas?

14. What I have said about Samskaras in my answer to Question 13 would also apply to Question 14 about the 'Karma Kanda'.

15. Hinduism has been defined as a Way of Life. In the present context what should constitute the way of Life?

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16. Is it not possible for all sections of Hindus, be they Advaitins, Dwaitins or Vishistadvaitins, to come together instead of remaining isolated as warring factions?

17. What is the future of Hinduism?

15, 16 & 17. *Vide* introductory observations.

18. As the world is coming to be divided into just two classes—atheists and theists—is it not advisable for all religions to come together? And what positive steps can be taken in this direction?

18. The presence of atheists and theists has been a permanent feature of the world throughout the ages and I do not think any attempt to bridge the gulf between the two outlooks is likely to succeed.

19. Do you envisage a different role for Hinduism in the Western countries where the influence of other great religions have been felt for centuries?

19. I do envisage a dynamic role for Hinduism in Western countries, because I believe that the history and development of Hindu religion and culture through its long period of over 5,000 years shows that Hindu religion and culture have developed harmonious synthesis between the pursuit of spiritual truth and material truth; today, the world is on the brink; the progress made by material physical sciences is breath-taking, but, unless this gress is accompanied and by ethical considerations, human race may have to fa disaster. It is the spiritual and ethos which should be guide of mankind and its ph progress should be the dy force which takes the human in its onward march. If ma progress is divorced from spi ethos, the result is bound to very unhappy for the whole w It may, as I have just said, ceivably lead to a disaster.

20. What is your view reg ing proselytisation? If you convinced that Hinduism h great role to play would you of proselytisation?

20. As I have already in ted, proselytisation is inconsi with the basic concept of H religion that truth is not its m poly. Indeed, it is this disting ing feature of Hinduism which given birth to the presence minorities in India. But, what may be one's feelings in that half, speaking as a pure matter doctrine, proselytisation nece rily assumes that the person wants to proselytise another sumes that his religion is be than the other person's relig and that is totally inconsistent the Hindu philosophy and gion. As *Bhagavad Gita* has

ये ऽप्यन्य देवताभक्ता : यजंते श्रद्धयान्वि

तेऽपि मामेव कौंतेय यजंत्यविधिपूर्वक

—Gita, IX

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Similarly, the same principle is enunciated very pithily in these words:

आनो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side.

—*Rigveda*, I-89-i.

Munshiji wisely adopted these words as the motto of the Bhavan.

All that we must do is to realise the basic and fundamental character of Hindu religion divorced from the superstitious superstructure under which the basic concept appears to be buried, and all enlightened Hindus should, by ceaseless educational and ethical propaganda, make the Hindu community consisting of Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Lingayats and others fully conscious of their glorious inheritance handed down to them by exalted, forward-looking and dynamic way of life which is Hinduism. If we do that, all will be well with Hindus and Hinduism.

21. Are changes visible in Hinduism—in its doctrinal content, mode of individual and collective worship—as a result of its contact with the West?

21. My answer to this question respectfully is that, having regard to my view about the basic character of Hinduism, no changes in Hinduism in its doctrinal content, mode of individual and collective worship, are either necessary, possible or even desirable as a result of its contact with the West. □ □ □

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, BOMBAY-7

(Department of Saral Sanskrit Examinations)

ENSUING

SARAL SANSKRIT EXAMINATIONS

Date of the Examination : 9-10 October 1976

Date for sending Application Forms : 31 August 1976

Examination Secretary.

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Short Story

Have You Got Money?

LILAVATI MUNSHI

3

WHEN he opened his eyes it was very dark. He slowly got up and began to walk leisurely towards his hut. Absent-mindedly he came near the door of his hut and was startled to see a motor car parked there. Though he could have seen it from afar, being absent-minded he noticed it only when he came near it. What kind of day it was? Nothing had happened for five years. Why did it all suddenly happen in one day? Without looking at the saluting chauffeur of the car he opened the door of his hut and went in. But before he could go up the small step of his room he heard a voice coming from the corner of his little garden.

"Hallo, Madhu! I was getting tired of waiting for you. Have you become such a big monk as to make people wait for you?" saying this one man came towards him in long strides. He wore a foreign style suit, so rare in that village. His hair was done in style. He had a half-finished cigar in his hand and as he smoked a costly diamond ring in one of his fing lit up the place. His lovely wa chain itself proclaimed his wea His entire being smelled of mo a lot of money.

As soon as he came near threw away his cigar and pre the hand of the monk. "Ma You do look like a big monk."

The monk looked at him fo little while and exclaimed: "Y Vidhu! How are you here?"

The visitor tried to keep his d nity and replied, "In search you, friend. These five days I a tired of looking for you." He to out the cigarette case from pocket.

"Why so much trouble to f me? Who told you that I am he The voice of the monk was dr

"Who can tell me? It was a guest of the Maharaja of Him nagar that I heard the fame o monk. I thought it must be y I knew you well. But will you a me in and give me something sit upon, or will you keep standing here?" saying this himself went in.

"Not even a chair? You seem

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become a real monk. Let Chandranana see this. I shall tell her, 'see, this is your monk' and she will run away."

The monk's eyebrows knitted. He tried to keep as much hold on himself as possible. "This is not a hut where I can welcome a wealthy man's wife. There is no need to bring her here."

"My wife!" he laughed. "Who told you that?" He slowly sat on the wooden box and began to smoke.

"What! You have not married Chandranana?" The monk's voice became harsh.

Vidhukant took away the cigar from his mouth and laughed. "You are just as you were though you have become a monk. See, you know that I was going to marry her, well. It was decided when you were there. But at the last minute she changed her mind. Is a woman true to anyone? Will she ever stick to her word?" He tapped the ashes on the floor, saying "I hope you have no objection."

For a time the monk became restless, but he could not help asking, "What objection? What was your object in coming here?"

"Objection? Where shall we search for it? Look here, friend, you know that I am a little pleasure-loving type. On the previous day of the marriage I got a little tipsy with drinks. I was caught. To sin is not objectionable but one should not be caught. And she broke the betrothal."

The monk looked at this man with hatred. He was the one who had taken away his beloved and made him miserable for nothing for years. He felt intense hatred for him, but such an insignificant man he was that he did not feel like killing him.

"Why are you staring at me so foolishly? Don't you understand what I tell you? She wanted my money. I wanted her beauty. It was her idea that I should only look at her and none else and that I should sit quietly at home. How was it possible? In an angry mood she must have said 'no.' I am sure she must have repented for that later." He smiled at the thought of her disappointment. Madhu with great dislike looked down on him. The realisation that he had wasted his whole life for such a man made him very unhappy.

"Friend! The woman was beautiful, no doubt. So far I have not met her match. Even now how smart she is!"

For a moment his eyes showed the animal in him, but only for a moment.

"Do you know why I have come here?" he added after some time. Madhu only looked at him with dislike. "Once you loved Chandra very much and there was a talk of your marrying her. Was it not? Had I not come in the way, you would have married her!" He cruelly added, "Even now Chandra is unmarried. A thought came to me that if an old friend can be made happy, why not try?"

Madhu wanted to push and

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drive him away. Every word of Vidhukant wounded his heart, "Have you anything more to say "

Vidhukant also saw his dislike and changed his tone. "See, friend, leave all this hypocrisy and do what I tell you and be happy. Chandranana still loves you and has remained unmarried for you. She has been searching you for years together." He added after some time, "She is still as beautiful as ever." He could not help talking in this way.

Vidhukant's words vividly revived in the monk's heart the image of Chandranana. Should he accept her who had cheated him in such a shameful way? His mind began to think. His mind's eyes saw the image of Chandranana, but in front of her stood the image of Madhavi. One was asking him for something and the other was looking at him eating *bor* fruits. He got the answer. 'No, no, no, no. She had cheated him in love without any pity, cheated him for the love of money and made him an outcast of the world. Should he accept her? Should he take her back? No, no, no.' Like a mad man he spoke loudly, "No, no, no."

Vidhukant noticed his madness. "Why do you say, 'No, no, no?' You spoiled your whole life for her and when she comes, you say 'No.' If she marries some one else, you will repent for your whole life. Staying alone, your mind has gone out of senses. Think again till she comes to see you tomorrow."

The monk was startled. "Chandra here?"

"Yes, I have sent her a telegram saying she could find you here. Now I go. I stay with the Maharaja whose camp is near the Saraswati temple. I shall be back for tonight's merry-making."

He looked at his watch, got up and bowed to the monk from a distance. "Sir, my salutations. Be come a human being. You have time till tomorrow," he said mockingly and got out of the door hurriedly.

After Vidhukant left, the monk sat there motionless. His whole life would have been changed if only Vidhu had come one day earlier. Till yesterday Chandra was in his heart like a living being. But today she was unwanted, unknown and seemed like a very distant person. He was angry at her. He thought that she was coming to disturb him in his quiet life.

He thought for the whole night. As soon as the image of Chandra came before his mind's eye the image of Madhavi became more real. The whole night his mind went on echoing, 'No, no, no.'

Next day Chandra came. She was as beautiful as ever before but now her beauty was of a different kind. Her face showed gravity instead of the gay abandon of olden times and she was pale with anxiety. She was looking whiter because of her sari. Her eyes were mild and full of beseeching.

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For a minute the monk was conquered and won over. This woman's power on him had not lessened. She came with hurried steps. "Madhu! Madhukant! Do you remember me or have you forgotten me altogether?" she asked in a winning, beseeching voice.

The monk did not know what to say. In her presence Madhavi was becoming distant. "Who may not know you? You are the most beautiful woman of the city, Chandranana." He tried to make his voice as distant as possible.

Chandra was a little upset. Was it really that this man had stopped loving her? A monk little remembers his worldly friendships. "I am lucky that you remembered even this much. Madhukant, I have not forgotten you for a moment all these years."

"The moment before the betrothal was broken or afterwards?" the monk spoke out before he could realise that he was talking.

Chandra became red in the face. "Madhukant! After so many years you taunt me like this! I have come to seek your pardon. Anyone is apt to make mistakes."

The monk's face became stern. "Indeed while playing with the lives of other people, women are free to make such mistakes. Why did you take all the trouble of coming over here?"

"Madhukant, taunt me as much as you like. I am at fault. But my mistake was not committed with a personal, selfish motive. Just listen to me a little. Then you may say whatever you like."

The monk's face showed sternness. He looked at her as if he disliked her. "I don't want to hear anything. You know that for a long time I am not accustomed to talking to women."

"Don't be so very cruel, Madhukant. I want to tell you why I consented to that marriage. You will say that it was for his money. True. But I did not want that money for myself."

She waited for a little while for the monk to say something. But as he did not say anything she continued. "My father ran into heavy loss in his business and Vidhu agreed to lend him money only if I married him. What was I to do? For me there were only two ways open. One, to marry you and see the old parents and my brothers and sisters without any roof over their head. Or, to sacrifice myself for the whole life and save everybody else. We did not imagine then that in a few days' time the father's business conditions will be quite different."

"And while saving the parents you sacrificed me!" he spoke, with much bitterness.

There were tears in Chandra's eyes. "Madhu, forgive me for once. I never knew that you would do this. I thought you would forget me and marry some other woman and be happy. I thought my parents' honour would be saved, that the lives of my brothers and sisters would not be

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spoiled and that I, the unlucky one, alone would have to suffer."

"Why did you give up in the middle your satisfaction of making such a great sacrifice?"

"After a few days, the second telegram came from abroad that father had been saved from ruination. But as word had been given to Vidhu, our marriage preparations did not stop. However Vidhu proved to be characterless. As soon as I came to know of it I broke the betrothal."

"As soon as your aim was achieved, you no longer wanted him."

"Taunt me as much as you like. Beat me with a stick if you so like. But allow me to serve you and repent."

She went up the steps from where she came and took hold of the monk's legs. "Madhu, dearest, I am going to stay under the protection of your feet."

For a moment Madhukant's heart melted. With the soft touch of Chandra's hands he felt that his whole soul was coming out. He felt like taking her in his hands and crushing her. But at the same time he felt that Madhavi was looking at him from the air and as if she was asking "Is she more beautiful than I am?"

Madhukant now spoke harshly, "Lady! You may go away. We have no connection with each other."

Chandra was startled and went a little away from him. "Madhukant! Remember, you will repent when I go that you discarded the Lakshmi who came to you on her own. I have always loved you and will go on doing so till the end of my life But if we separate now, we are not going to meet again in this life."

Again she softened and came near and sat near his feet. "Madhukant, dearest, forgive me this time and allow me to stay near your feet."

While saying this her whole body bent down on his feet and her tears wetted his feet. Her soft hands and the smell of her body made him excited.

In a weak voice Madhukant spoke, "Lady! go away. I do not know you and if I know you, I know only to hate you."

Chandra suddenly stood up. "I see that in your life there is no place for me. It is natural that you hate me. I shall love you always during my life-time and worship you. Dearest Madhu, be happy if you can be without me. I shall never come in your way to make you unhappy."

She spoke all these without stopping and without looking at Madhukant. She turned back and went away in haste and while going out she turned back but once with tears in her eyes.

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As soon as she went, Madhukant went into his room and stretched himself on the rug. He was tired. For all the uneventful last five years, he was perturbed

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by these two days' events one after the other. Where were Madhavi, Vidhu and Chandra? How fate had sent them one after the other on the same day!

For some time he was happy. He could make this good-looking, selfish woman unhappy. She deserved that unhappiness. She never cared whether he was miserable. Why should he now pity her?

Slowly Vidhu and Chandra became more distant and only Madhavi came looking a thousand times more beautiful. Mentally he began to talk to her: 'Madhavi! That woman is gone. Did you see her?'

Madhavi's eyes seemed to say 'yes.'

'Madhavi, She came to marry me but I sent her away.'

Madhavi seemed to be smiling and pleased.

'Now, will you marry me?'

Madhavi seemed to ask him, 'Have you got money?'

Madhukant sat up startled. Madhavi's image laughingly disappeared.

On his forehead there were drops of perspiration. He heard the mocking laughter of Chandra.

Two days and nights he went on dreaming about Madhavi. Every time she seemed to be melting away or flying away. Every time he went on mentally pleading with her. Every time his attraction for her went on increasing. Every time she came in new forms, and he was getting more and more fascinated.

His misery became unbearable. Every minute his eagerness went on becoming more and more acute. He felt that he could not live without Madhavi.

Madhavi had told him that her parents were having advanced views. From the look of the girl, he felt that they were well to do. Will they get her daughter married only for money?

And if he were to go into the world again, he had enough strength to earn money and give Madhavi a comfortable living. Once he was considered a learned man. Elders had built up great hopes on him. People believed that he was capable of doing great things. But Chandra's betrayal had made his whole life worthless. For such an unfaithful woman, why make the whole life worthless? By marrying Madhavi he would show to Chandra that he had got a better woman than her.

He thought of going and meeting Madhavi's father. He remembered that Madhavi had invited him to meet her father. He could not decide for long whether to go or not. He had not gone out to see anybody for years. How to go now?

At last he opened the wooden box which had remained unopened for long. He took out from it his worn-out coat, *dhoti* and cap. The coat had become discoloured in many places and there were also holes here and there. The cap was in no better condition. The

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dhoti and the shirt had become yellow. He spent two or three hours thinking whether to wear those clothes or not.

Suddenly he remembered that on Sunday they would be leaving. Only a day left. He must go today. Otherwise he would never be able to meet them.

He opened a bag which was lying in the corner of the box, took out a broken mirror and saw himself in it. His own face was unknown to him.

As soon as he decided he shaved off his beard. He felt that he had become a new man.

At last he put on the clothes and his appearance changed at once. Instead of a legendary monk he became the best specimen of a civil man. Because of worry and sleeplessness his face was deadly pale. His eyes were burning like a live charcoal.

From a little bag lying in a corner he took out Rs. 500 which he had put by for emergency and kept it in his pocket. He looked round as if he would never return. Everywhere he saw the welcome greetings written for Madhavi. He smiled. 'I shall bring Madhavi here or else I shall go with her. This garden will have beautiful steps and how it will be transformed!'

He looked at his musical instrument and the few books which were the only companions of his lonely life. And that man who was fully bound by his new attachment spoke loudly.

At last he closed his eyes and came out on the road and began to run. His enthusiasm lessened as he came near the state bungalow. He heard band music. Many people were going in that direction. Everybody was in a hurry.

'How to find Madhavi in such a crowd?' He stopped one villager and asked. "Brother, what is going on in that guest house?"

"Don't you know. That is the guest of the Maharaja, Vidya Master. who has come here for getting married." Saying this he went away in a hurry. In the small village he was hearing band music for the first time. He was not ready to forgo that pleasure.

Some unknown fear filled Madhu's brain. He thought a thousand thoughts and in a moment heard the words, 'Have you got money?' as if somebody was uttering those words from above.

His body became weak. His enthusiasm was gone. His legs merely carried him in that direction.

As if he had lost his senses and making his way through the jostling crowd he went up the steps of the bungalow.

A richly attired Madhavi and a smart looking Vidhukant were smilingly receiving the greetings of people.

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WHY ARE WE HERE?

A Scientific and Philosophical Study of Human Existence

R. N. JOSHI, F.I.E. (INDIA)

THE purpose of this article is to locate the position of man in the vast arena of existence; to try to think out the meaning of this big game if there be any such meaning; whether man has any significant role to play; what are his potentialities; how he is discharging himself; and to try to see if the study indicates any line of action.

To start with, I would like to refer to the size of the Universe. According to science, universe though vast is finite. Long distances are measured in light years. A light year is the distance travelled by light in one year at its speed of 186,000 miles per second. The size of the universe is estimated at 21.2 billion light years.

We live on the earth, one of the planets of the solar system. Man is a tiny speck on the globe which

itself would vanish into oblivion in comparison with the universe. I would suggest a relationship between the size of the earth and the universe, being expressed for convenience of memorization by the word 'STESSGAUN,' meaning

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grain of sand, height of tree, diameter of the earth, diameter of the solar system, diameter of the galaxy and diameter of the universe being in geometrical proportion with about a million as a multiplying factor. There are billions and billions of planets which are located in zones of comparable temperatures as of the earth. Apart from the feasibility of any different forms of life than those perceived on our planet, it would be hazardous to say with certainty that ours is the only planet to beget life. With the limitations of our knowledge it is proposed to limit this study to the framework of life on our planet, the earth.

It is seen that situations on this planet, the earth, have been meticulously planned to sustain and support life. This indicates that life may not be a mere accident.

Life *vs.* Non-Life

The origin of life on earth is estimated to have been two billion years old. Nothing is known as to how life originated once upon a time, what preceded such an event, and whether the process except by reproduction, repeated any other time, or continues in some form even now.

The most significant aspect of a living body is that it consists of an equipment and an operator. The equipment is a sort of mechanism built of material composed of highly complex organic substances different from the inorganic compositions of the inanimate world. Life commences when the operator takes charge of the equipment and terminates when he leaves it. The functioning of the equipment is rhythmic in character involving several cyclic and periodic operations of events such as hunger, thirst, pulsation of heart, breath, secretion of glands and sex. Science concerns itself more with the equipment of life; and philosophy with the operator thereof.

Again matter in non-life is itself well organized and involves regular rhythmic movements of its minute constituents and obeys well-defined laws of stress-strain relationship, fatigue, expansion and contraction and so on, which should indicate in matter some lower level of life than total deadliness. Non-life has no free will. Life introduces free will which goes on developing with higher forms of life. Mobility in animals indicates more freedom. Man is endowed with full freedom of thought and action. God is great and His creation vast; yet man has freedom of thought even beyond the great God and His vast creation.

The entire system of life cycles of different species of animal, plant and microbiological life have been extremely well interwoven to perpetuate life with marvellous controls of checks and balances though some of the strategies may be apparently thought of as cruel to affected parties. The cons

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of a life cycle consisting of birth, growth, long matured adult life, old age, decay and death as applied to individuals accompanied by promotion of the species as a whole and bringing about suitable adjustments in structure and function to suit changing situations is in itself a marvellous scheme. For the individual, inevitable death during old age is a blessing in disguise saving him from acute pains and hardships which otherwise would be his lot. Nature has equipped life with wonderful body structures and organs to discharge several physiological processes through the various well organised systems such as digestive system, blood circulation, nervous system, respiratory system, reproductive system etc. The functioning of each of these systems in animals is so complicated and involved and the organs for doing these functions so elaborately designed and packed in the mobile body supported by the bony skeleton and protected by fleshy cushions that each animal stands as a profound testimony to the mysteries of what nature can produce. It is also endowed with some special feature usually intended as a protective device. Thus a scorpion has its stings, the bull its horns, the squirrel its swiftness and the lion his strength. Life function often incorporates extremely complicated metabolic processes involving specialised and delicate operations, and the way this is brought about on such a huge scale and often with instantaneous actions is simply amazing for a thinker, though the life itself takes these for granted. Above all, life is endowed with an acute desire to continue to live against several odds and to reproduce and thus to perpetuate the species. To enable the life to carry out these basic functions nature provides it with instinctive knowledge. Thus a new-born babe can feel hunger and has the instinct of sucking milk from its mother. It starts breathing instantaneously without any earlier instruction or experience.

Distinctive Role of Man

The greatest attribute of man as distinct from the rest of the animate world is that he is endowed with a kilo and a half of grey matter—his brain—which works as an automatic computer and even something more. The design and working of this highly complex human organ, so compact and protected is a mystery of mysteries.

Another speciality of man in the animal kingdom is the use of hands. The advancement of man has been possible through the coordinated and complementary functioning between thought and action through the brain and the hands, his two distinctive features.

Advancement of man has further been possible through the activity of communication he has

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so ably developed. He developed language to decipher and label emotions, objects and ideas by words and action symbols with tremendous amount of nicety and subtlety. He has been able to extend the scope of his senses many-many-fold beyond that of the bare senses with the help of instruments devised by him. Thus through a 200 in. telescope he can see stars 8,000 million light years away.

Apart from the qualities of his brain, use of hands, extended use of senses and art of communication, the real attributes of man characterising him are his developed mind and soul, conscience and sub-conscience, sense of art and culture, and quest for knowledge and deeper understanding. Man is endowed with a superb equipment and is a superb 'operator' and, therefore, he has excellent life opportunities. The anatomical and physiological evolution must only be be a superficial exposition of the finer equipment of man and must be a part of the larger and total evolution.

Man is on a progressive march; and his equipment looks to be tuning itself. It is likely that if the present model of equipment of man has the potentiality of larger attainments to fit in the scheme of larger evolution the model may well continue, of course, with due tuning and balancing. It is too early to judge if the present equipment is good enough for the purpose. If it is not, further evolutionary process would be inevitable.

Man has two roles to play—the animal role and the super-animal role. This often creates a conflict in him. He has to play the animal role successfully enough to safeguard himself and his species and to keep him alive and healthy to be able to play the superanimal role with distinction. The superanimal role is an end in itself, the main objective of mankind, the animal role a means to an end. With his superanimal urge for understanding and realization he can establish unison in apparently diverse observations and can resolve all conflicts. It is for man to find out the *via media* between his two seemingly conflicting roles—the animal and the superanimal. How far man has been doing it will be examined in what follows.

Probe of Western Thinker

Study of sciences has demonstrably brought out universality of behaviour of objects irrespective of variation in time, place and the observer. The scientist is however acutely conscious of his limitations. The scientist searches into the vast space and his probe in the analysis of an atom has yielded bounties of information. Yet he finds that depth of his information is proportionate to the efficacy of his observations and that he is nowhere near the totality of knowledge. The scientist gets baffled and the scientist-philosopher gets

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frustrated. Analysis leads nowhere but deepens the problem.

An important aspect of investigation has been the relationship of matter, body and mind and to locate the seat of animation in the human body. The man of science has some knowledge of how senses function and of the external processes of perception. We have some knowledge as to the regions of the brain to carry out the assigned functions. Something is known about the biochemical processes controlling pituary and other glands producing either the tears of sorrow, the blush on the checks, or fountaining the mother's milk. But neither science nor the science-based philosophy has a glimpse of the operator behind. The biochemical processes are just the *modus operandi* of how things are brought about. It is not the *master operandi*. It is not the crown that rules nor the pen that writes. These are but the transferred epithets. The real ruler and writer are different. Who is it that really perceives through the senses. Who is it that experiences the joy or the sorrow? Where is he seated? The scientist has no knowledge of the operator proper and none as to who prompts the operator.

Approach of Oriental Seers

Whatever the stage of scientific knowledge and its application to daily life that prevailed in the Vedic and Upanishadic times, some of the oriental seers of that age had obtained considerable insight in metaphysical matters on which hardly anything is known to the modern science. It is often supposed that science of the present day was obviously beyond the reach of mankind in those days. Obscurity regarding the exact knowledge prevailing at that time is due to the fact that the knowledge through the scriptures is allegorical in form. It is however likely that some scientific truths in astronomy were known to them and here are a few illustrations. The sun god was highly respected and the number 108 is considered holy in relation to the sun. It cannot be just a coincidence that the diameter of the sun is 864,000 miles, *i.e.*, 108 times the equatorial diameter of the earth. That the earth was round was known in the Vedic times some 10,000 years ago. It was allegorically suggested to be resting on *Shesha*, the cobra. The philosophic interpretation is that the earth has sprung from a very insignificantly small fraction of the Absolute. A science-based interpretation could be that the earth is supported on or is balanced by the rest of the universe. Still another instance may be the concept of Brahma's day covering 4.32 billion years which is not far different than the age of earth as ascertained by modern science. There are descriptions indicating the manner of creation of the cosmos such as that it started with the nebula or ocean of gases,

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which seems to have some relevance in the light of modern theories on the subject. Several evidences indicate that at least some scientific truths were known to the *Rishis* of old. As to how they acquired this knowledge is anybody's guess. In passing it might be mentioned that depth of thinking and preciseness of expression had reached a fairly high level in those days as can be judged from the fact that there are more than hundred words for water to indicate the propriety of its source and user, and there are different words to indicate several decimals upto billion billions.

It can be said with certainty that the old oriental seers did not give much value to physical sciences of the mortal world and possibly did not utilize them much in securing comforts of daily life as in the modern age. They had, however, given considerable emphasis on metaphysical aspects. All manifest and non-manifest arise from the Absolute, the one beyond description and beyond the perception of human senses, for the Absolute is beyond limitations of time and space. It is at His Will and His sacrifice that the formless has taken form and split into infinite forms, different and distinct. The ultimate reality is one, though the learned describe it in various ways. The entire diversity has a core of unity, since unity has created the diversity. One in the many is the corollary of many from the one. The Absolute involved in the entire creation. The process of evolution continues. It is what is involved that gets evolved. Matter, life and mind are the stages of evolution. Man with his tremendous potentialities is at the helm of the evolutionary process. Realization of the Absolute by man is the object of the evolution. Realization is possible through the concerted effort by man coupled with the grace from the Almighty. He is liberal in offering all grace and hence it is the self-effort of man which is all important. To put the necessary self-effort, self purification is needed, starting with healthy body, alertness of mind and clarity of thought.

An Appraisal

In the history of mankind to the extent it is known or can be guessed, during the last 10,000 years, say, we have had towering personalities who can be said to have had the insight of the mysteries of existence and had an approach to the ultimate reality. If this is so, a question arises if mankind is really progressing or otherwise in fact degenerating. In respect of physical sciences and its application in fulfilling our daily needs and looking to the comforts of man, the progress is unquestionable. But is man making any significant contribution in quenching the human thirst for the knowledge of the ultimate? Man is an animal and sometimes

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more. It is the quantum and proportion of 'something more' that makes the quality of man as distinct from an animal. Man has a belly in common with the animal, and he has to fill it to keep the machine going. But man's special privilege and distinctive attributes are his mind, his capacities for experiencing and his latent thirst for the knowledge of the ultimate reality. If he uses his brain merely for filling his belly, he is only living as a polished animal, not as a man. His 'manness' is to be judged from his attainments in human qualities. Is man really progressing in his 'manness'?

If it is considered that in the age of ancient *Rishis* man had made substantial spiritual progress, it has to be said that mankind could not retain the acquired treasure. The sublimating principle of the dictum of 'work without attachment' was lost sight of in a subsequent period, and people tended towards inaction. Surrender to the Master turned into renunciation of life. Realization or communion with the ultimate developed into the concept of freedom from the repetitive cycle of life and death, thereby contributing to the negative approach to life. Life came to be considered as a tyranny and as a most dreaded punishment. Life presented a serious and gloomy look. In the misconstrued pursuit of transcendental fulfilment and happiness, charm and relish in enjoying several experiences in life, individual as well as social, were denied, taking all existence as illusory. It appears that the consequent escapism and denial led to a dark period wherein spiritualism was forgotten and material prosperity shunned.

In the West, on the other hand, materialism has been on trial. Industrial revolution gave it a great fillip. Man has not only produced a machine but has converted himself into a machine, losing all individuality and inspiration. In his life-long preoccupation in earning a living in most cases and, amassing more and more wealth in others, man has no time nor the peace of mind for any superanimal attainments. Enjoyment of worldly pleasures of "eat, drink and be merry" type, to whatever extent they are available to a man do not seem to satisfy him. Acquisition of such illusory pleasures gives him no satisfaction but makes him more greedy. The drink paradoxically enhances the thirst. Man leads a life of acute stresses and strains. He has conflicts all round—conflicts with nature, conflicts with his fellow beings and conflicts with his inner self. In trying to catch happiness for himself he gets engulfed in deep worries and sorrows. To forget his sorrows he tries tranquillizers. His mind is the abode of envy. His vision is distorted. His action is crooked. Devoid of idealism, he manages vicious acts, multiplies, and defends them. The pollution also extends to his phy-

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sical surroundings; air is foul, water contaminated, food adulterated. Mankind seems to be at the turning point. Man derives no happiness from materialism. The outcome is total frustration.

Rapid advances in science seem to be having toxic side effects on the society. Man has become intoxicated with the pride of his treasure 'catch' of inventions and discoveries, which stand in sharp contrast not only with the achievements of the animal world but also with the history of mankind. Man has brought about the explosion of sciences during the century. He took wings and started flying. He has exploded atom bombs and released tremendous amount of energy by breaking open the tiny atom. He sent his messengers and has planted his flag on the moon. He thinks of snatching away nature's privilege in the allotment of sex to the newborn. He might succeed in rearing a baby in a test tube. He is on the way to produce a living cell, however tiny. (The discovery howsoever creditable for man is actually tantamount to uncovering life in matter). Though the discoveries have turned some scientists into philosophers and have made them humble with the realization of the tremendous potentialities of nature, science has converted the outlook of the average man and has given him a feeling that he has mastered nature. He seems to be in a mood to challenge the creator. This is changing his manner of life. To him life becomes ar ficial. Sex usurps the seat of lo Culture is obsolete. Art is a whim of the whimsical. Ideal is the way of the faddist. Vi nary is considered an idiot. G has been expelled from the sce Well, the dog is barking at master. The child rebukes at parents. Man finds nature worthless, even inimical.

The West has captured world and drags it westwa The world has been benefitted the advances in science. Bou of experimental results and th far-reaching inferences are av able to the thinking mind to ea some understanding of the rea The greatest service of science mankind is in fighting natural ca mities, in protecting man from odds, providing him food, she and clothing, and in offering h all comforts. If science is filte of its toxic effects on mankind can be a great tool indeed for m to fulfil not only his animal ne but his super-animal attainme as well.

In the materialistic attitude life as we have at present, it deals with transactions in which one gains the other loses, Hap ness and sorrow look to be t sides of the same coin. M splits into classes, one against other—the employer *versus* employee, the landlord *versus* tenant, the merchant *versus* customer and the haves against have-nots. In such cases,

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flicts are inevitable. Happiness for all is an impossibility. This is so because of the short-sighted and selfish attitude of the participants. For want of a better word I will call this attitude as 'bipolar attitude', which tries to set the interest of the one part as against the interest of the other part. It would be advisable to change the attitude to a unifying attitude in which both the participants stand to get happiness out of the deal. Unifying approach in certain respects is not unknown in our life. Thus love begets love, goodness inspires goodness, symphony enriches harmony, one torch enkindles another, wisdom spreads wisdom. It will be possible for man to replace the bipolar attitude by a unifying attitude by adopting the super-animal approach. He has to learn to live with a larger and benevolent mind and with a wider and illumined self-interest leading to unison and no conflicts. In his daily life and in carrying out several transactions he should accentuate basically on points of common interest rather than on a few advantages he would apparently gain for himself by manoeuvring some tricks. This approach would humanise man's life and would bring happiness for the mankind.

Man is exposed to pain and suffering—both physical and mental. This often leads him to attribute pain to some harassing forces. The physical pain is nature's method of timely intimation of faults in body functioning and asking for attention and correction which otherwise would lead to more serious disorders. The *modus operandi* of such timely signals in the working of so complex a machinery as the human body, exposed to variable situations—both natural and man-made—is more to be welcomed and admired than to be complained against. His mental suffering may be due to loss of possessions or due to loss in financial transactions he might have undertaken. These could be reduced to the minimum if mankind adopts unipolar approach in life as suggested earlier. Sometimes man gets disturbed by obvious injustice in life wherein the vicious prosper and the virtuous suffer. The fact of the matter is that man's understanding is based on patchy and incomplete information from a short portion of the spectrum of total knowledge. Not much is known to either science or philosophy of nature's administration of justice or of the fate of an individual electron (without free will) or of man (with his free will) in certain situations. What they know is only the general trend. In any case it may be generalised that mental suffering of man on whatever account could be amply toned down with a proper frame of mind.

Conclusion

I now like to draw some conclusions from this study. It was

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mentioned earlier that though the universe is vast and extensive, our knowledge regarding it is limited and hence this study was restricted to the life on earth. After having made a general survey of life on earth and more particularly of human existence it is observed that man has been quite active on the dynamic wheels of science, but he very much lacks direction and even basic understanding regarding the purpose of creation and the objective of evolution, a process of continuous unfolding of life-forms and events. His advancement has been lopsided and unbalanced. Anyway, whatever be the process of evolution in terms of development of matter, life, mind, and anything further, whether man with his present limitations can reach the desired objective and if any creature with superhuman powers would be coming on the scene, it is pretty sure that such happenings would be a long drawn process and would need an extensive period of time. It looks therefore desirable for us to lay down a still lesser framework, wherein we can get an answer to what we can do here and now, so long as the line of action for the lesser framework does not go counter to that in the larger framework and is consistent with it. Understanding of the ultimate reality and the realisation of the Absolute is supposed to lead a person to eternal fulfilment and happiness ever afterwards, both in this life and any other. As against this objective in the larger fram work, we could very well consi life-long happiness of a type whi will not fade or wither away a our immediate objective in th lesser framework. We can al ask for such pure happiness fo one and all. It is hoped that th objective would be universa acceptable irrespective of dif rences of castes and creeds, or re gious faiths, or political ideologi In fact, it may be considered to b the highest common factor of a religions, the bridge between ear and heaven. Achieving this ob jective of real and life-long hap ness for one and all is not th easy. Raselus wandered the wor over in search of a happy man an could not meet one. In th modern world things look to hav worsened. We have to ask ou selves as to what is it that would make one fully happy and al what is it that would make every body in this world equally happy.

For a man to be happy it i necessary that his animal needs ar met with in a reasonable way an his super-animal expectations fo filled. He needs food, clothing and shelter. Man needs protection against natural calamities an perils such as floods, drough earthquakes and the like which, a we know from our sad experience can cause tremendous hardship t mankind. Man is to be guarde against diseases and epidemics and should be enabled to lead a healthy, active and alert life. H has to be supplied with the nece

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of a community life. He must be furnished with recreation facilities. He must have venues to develop and express art and culture as an important feature of his extended skill in communication and self-expression. These needs of man, I would call, are his earthly needs. Satisfaction of these needs is necessary to make a person happy. But happiness, demands much more than the satisfaction of these basic earthly needs of man.

Whereas pleasure and comfort are the attributes of senses, happiness is the attribute of mind. Pleasure and happiness are not synonyms in that sense, nor are suffering and happiness antonyms. Comforts may make a person happy for a short while. True happiness comes from within; it is inspired. A balanced mind and clarity of thought can make one happy. Fulfilment of super-animal urge in man brings him happiness. Dedicated selfless service to humanity is the royal path to achieve the objective of pure and life-long happiness for mankind. Leading an active life with unipolar attitude in mutual interest is indicated as the directive for our action here and now. This would amount to action without attachment and without desire to earn something for oneself, taking care that this does not degenerate into inaction. Life must remain dynamic but one might well consider all actions being offered to the feet of the Almighty. The consequent effect would be to raise the potential of happiness all round, and not to have happiness in some quarter being cancelled by unhappiness in another. This can lead to the realization of our immediate objective in the lesser framework wherein happiness would be pure and real, life-long and all-pervading.

Ishopanishad has given a directive in connection with the larger framework as

विद्यां च अविद्यां च यस्तद् वेद
उभयं सह।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययाऽमृतम्
अश्नुते॥

This means that one who has understood both spiritual knowledge and non-spiritual knowledge severally and jointly would overcome death through non-spiritual knowledge and would acquire immortality through spiritual knowledge. (This translation may be taken as a liberal one as the word *Avidya* is interpreted in different ways, sometimes as non-knowledge, sometimes as *Karma* as against spiritual knowledge. On similar lines, I take the liberty of stating the objective for the lesser framework as

विज्ञानं तत्त्वविद्यां च यस्तद् वेद
उभयं सह।
विज्ञानेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्यया
सुखम् अश्नुते॥

One who studies both science and philosophy separately and in

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relation to each other, would enable man to overcome mortal or earthly problems (like the ones to fight natural calamities, disease etc.) with the help of science and would make one happy through the knowledge about oneself in relation to the creation.

The universe exhibits infinite manifestation of the becoming and consists of multiple differentiations and distinctions. As such it poses a highly complex differential equation. By mathematical analogy the solution indicated is one of integration. For the highly complex philosophical problem of understanding the meaning of multiple existence, the indicated solution is synthesis. In tune with both of these indications what is suggested herein is the integral approach. It is not the matter alone that matters; the spirit matters even more. Mind the spirit; mind the body as well for it embodies the spirit. Take care of the equipment. Also take care of the operator and the control organization. Take due care of bodily needs which form a necessary part of the final objective of spiritual fulfilment. Combine the qualities of head and heart. The brain offers powerful tools and the heart provides motivation and gives proper direction. The combination of head and heart can lead man to perfection. As an immediate step to reach the final objective, man can attain pure and lifelong happiness for his entire race through the prudent combination of science and philosophy. Man is on the right path if he synthesizes science and philosophy.

I conclude my article with the prayer:

Let All be happy and free from disease
Let all look at others with regard and respect and
Let no one cause pain to any body else
Let Silence, Peace and Tranquillity pervade the entire world.

सर्वेऽत्र सुखिनः सन्तु सर्वे सन्तु निरामया।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःखमाप्नुयात्।
ॐ शांतिः। शांतिः॥ शांतिः॥

Courtesy : Journal of the Institution of Engineers.

Life is more than motion, it is Music; more than rest, it is Peace; more than work; it is Duty; more than labour, it is Love; more than enjoyment, it is Blessedness; more than acquiring money and position and reputation, it is Knowledge, Purpose, Strong and high Resolve.

—James Allen

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Padmavibhushan
Dr. Sir A. R. MUDALIAR
A Many-Splendoured Genius

S. RAMAKRISHNAN

DEATH indeed comes to all men and claims *all* of most men. But when it comes to great men, death has to be merely content with the *mortal frame* for, the *immortal fame* is beyond its icy hands.

Padmavibhushan Dr. Sir Arcot Ramaswami Mudaliar who passed away on July 17, 1976 at the ripe age of 89, was certainly one such great man.

He symbolised a happy blend of the best in the East and the West, as also the best in the past and the present, his sight always set to the future. He was a Citizen of the World.

Yes, the Cedar tree has fallen but its fragrance will endure for decades to come.

II

Dr. Mudaliar modelled his own personal life on exemplary lines. Intelligent and industrious, dynamic and decisive, honest and incorruptible, fearless and undaunted, he always lucidly expounded with refreshing candour the cause of truth and justice, as he saw them.

It was the soul-stirring speeches of Swami Vivekananda that set aflame the hearts of the twins, the Arcot Brothers—Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar and Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar—to strive for attaining oratorial eminence and dedicate their lives for the regeneration of the motherland and mankind.

As an instance of Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar's accomplishments, particularly oratory, this is what Earl Halifax, the then Chancellor of the University of Oxford, (who as Viceroy of India signed the famous Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931 and was British Foreign Secretary) said in 1946, while conferring on him the Degree of Doctor of Civil Laws of the Oxford University: "Most accomplished of men and most eloquent of orators, in the field of economics, you bring from the East the light of your wisdom to a world lost in darkness."

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III

In the closing years of World War II, Dr. Mudaliar was chosen by Field Marshal Lord Archibald Wavell, the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, to lead the Indian Delegation to the Founding Session of the United Nations held in San Francisco in 1945.

To quote Mr. C. Wilfred Jenks, who was the Principal Deputy Director-General of the International Labour Office, Geneva: "When the time came, in 1945, for a second effort to write a *Constitution for Mankind*, Dr. Ramaswami, who led the Indian Delegation at the San Francisco Conference, played an outstanding part as Chairman of the Committee of the Conference which framed the economic and social provisions of the Charter of the United Nations."

Dr. Mudaliar was the first President of the Economic and Social Council of the U.N. and continued as President for the next four Sessions (1946-47). A year later he led the Indian Delegation to the U.N. Maritime Conference and the U.N. Freedom of Information Conference. He was associated with the International Civil Service Advisory Board since 1949 and, from 1959 till his demise, he served as Chairman of this Board.

IV

It was during his term of office as Commerce and Supply Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council that Dr. Mudaliar became aware of the urgent need to build up the nation's industrial potential. To quicken the pace of planned industrialisation of India and to foster research and development have been among his magnificent obsessions.

Dr. Mudaliar served India truly and well. He provided leadership for many pioneering ventures in many fields, but the founding of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (C.S.I.R.) is the most significant service he rendered to Mother India. The great strides Free India has been able to make in the field of scientific and industrial research owe not a little to the solid base which the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research provided, thanks to the far-seeing vision of Dr. Mudaliar who started it in 1941 when India was in bondage.

In May 1947, with the threat of partition looming large, the Nizam of Hyderabad made a bid for independence of Hyderabad. He wanted Hyderabad to remain a sovereign State, outside the Indian Union.

After months of long drawn-out, weary negotiations a Standstill Agreement was signed between the Government of India and Hyderabad. The Nizam honoured it more in the breach. Ultimately the Agreement was denounced. The resolute Sardar decided to close the net. On 10th September 1948, Nizam's emissary Moin Nawaz Jung, left Hyderabad

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a Sydney Cotton plane to lead the so-called Hyderabad Delegation to the Security Council and lodged a protest against India's "war-like action." Sardar rightly chose Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar to lead the Indian Delegation. It was Dr. Mudaliar who christened the work of the Indian Army led by General J. N. Choudhuri as "Police Action", designed to restore law and order. Exactly 4 days and 13 hours after the "Police Action" began, on 17th September 1949 the Nizam broadcast a "cease-fire" and invited the Indian Army. Dr. Mudaliar made a very effective point of this broadcast of the Nizam and drove home to the Security Council that "Indian forces entered Hyderabad at the Nizam's invitation." This led to the unceremonious striking out of the Hyderabad case from the Security Council agenda.

V

Seldom do two brothers, even if they are twins, succeed in attaining an equal degree of eminence and well-merited distinction, nationally and internationally, as the Mudaliar Brothers—Rama and Lakshmana. They are two dazzling diamonds, the "Pride of India."

Tributes galore have been paid to the memory of these illustrious Brothers. We shall therefore be content with recalling their association with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Dr. Sir Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar was the Chairman of the Bhavan's Madras Kendra ever since its inception in 1958 till his passing away in 1974.

Like his distinguished brother, Dr. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar was aslo equally interested in the progress of the Bhavan. Let me mention but one instance.

When in 1960 the Bhavan decided to put up a fitting "working memorial" for the Indomitable Sardar, in the shape of an Engineering College at our Andheri Campus in suburban Bombay, an appeal for financial support went out to Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar also. His headquarters were then in Calcutta.

His response was spontaneous and magnificent. He first offered a donation of Rs. 75,000/-. The very next day, he made his contribution a round Rs. 1,00,000/- by providing advertisement support for another Rs. 25,000/-.

The covering letter Dr. Mudaliar wrote to Shri S.K. Patil, an Hon. Member of the Bhavan and Chairman of the Organising Committee of the Bhavan's Sardar Patel Engineering College project, forwarding the cheques was very touching. Dr. Mudaliar recalled that Sardar Patel and himself had fought many bitter political battles in the pre-independence era, but with the advent of independence, all those had become sweet memories.

Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar disclosed that, in 1946, the redoubtable Sardar told him "The Transfer of Power from Britain to India

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is no longer uncertain. To forget is human; to forgive is divine. Let us put a sponge across the past conflicts and controversies. Freedom has come to India *as a whole* and not to the Congress Party alone. All available talents and experience should be pooled and harnessed to build up a strong, disciplined and prosperous India."

Dr. Mudaliar added that Sardar, the pragmatic idealist, was keen on his taking up the Commerce and Industries portfolio to the Interim Government.

The complete freedom from rancour and nobility of the "Iron Man of India" towards even a doughty political foe who had given him relentless battles for decades, deeply moved Dr. Mudaliar. He instantaneously pledged to dedicate his great talents and rich experience to the cause of Free India.

VI

Thus has Charles Kingsley described eloquently great men who are the salt of the earth:

"Good men, honest men, accurate men, righteous men, patient men, self-restraining men, fair men, modest men, men who are aware of their vast ignorance compared with the vast amount that there is to be learnt in such a Universe as this; men who are accustomed to look at both sides of a question; who, instead of making up their minds in haste like bigots and fanatics, wait like wise men for more facts and more thought about the facts."

Dr Ramaswami Mudaliar was certainly one such great man, the salt of the earth.

The Bhavan dips its flag in reverential homage to this distinguished son of India.

THREE MILLION MILES BY AIR

As might be expected, in view of his strenuous activity in world affairs, Dr. Sir Arcot Ramaswami Mudaliar is a well-known figure on Indian and international airlines.

He has travelled well over three million miles by air and it is said that a letter addressed to him C/o. Air India is likely to reach him sooner than one sent to his office.

Air travel, in fact, affords him one of the few opportunities that come his way for relaxation and he welcomes the chance to settle down for a few hours with a detective novel. Not surprisingly, he is inclined to view with disfavour the development of ground-to-air telephone facilities.

(Courtesy: Lloyd's Register of Shipping Bulletin)

This issue of the "Bhavan's Journal" was well set for printing when the news of Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar's death reached us. We had to therefore hold over the Notes and News and the Book Review to accommodate the feature on Dr. Mudaliar.—Ed.

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I feel that we are shutting the door against this vast treasure-house of knowledge, shutting the door against progress itself by banning the study of English..

A Counsel of Caution

—Dr. A. R. Mudaliar

THE place of language in school and college, the medium of instruction, the compulsory study of what is termed the National Language in all States and educational institutions, has evoked the most bitter controversies in many parts of India. I am not concerned with these controversies except to the extent of the effect of these proposals on the education imparted to the student.

I realise that it is desirable to have a language which is generally understood in course of time by all citizens of the Indian Republic. I also feel that in no country has it been possible to have every citizen turned into a scholar in that national language.

Greatly daring I venture to express a few thoughts on Hindi which by the Constitution is intended to be the official language of the Republic of India. You will excuse my temerity if I venture to express these thoughts in the very citadel of Hindi culture and linguistic excellence.

Coming from South India, knowing a little of the background of thought and feeling on the subject, may I suggest, as one who realises the need and inevitable emergence of a widely spoken national language, that a policy of hastening slowly is best calculated to achieve the objective.

Those who show impatience at the pace of progress in this direction, those who feel that they can use their dominant position and their political authority to overrule dissentient opinion and to impose orders to accelerate progress, are in my opinion doing great disservice to the cause.

May I also state with emphasis,

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but with no intention of provoking controversy, that such attitude and conduct has done the greatest disservice to the cause of higher education, particularly professional education. I feel there can be no safer guide in this matter than that which was laid down by the Inter-University Board some years back and reiterated at its last session.

I would not be presenting a true and comprehensive picture of the situation, if I did not refer to the place of English in our educational system. Old prejudices sometimes die hard and I am not certain whether the reminiscences of an era when India was fighting for freedom has not sometimes clouded a proper judgment on this subject.

When I listen to or read diatribes against the English language as the language of Imperialism, when I hear it referred to as a foreign language whose use is poisonous to the growth of Nationalism and to the restoration of the pristine purity of the Hindu fold, I confess I am amazed and bewildered.

How could our political Institutions have functioned if it were not for the spread of the English language throughout the length and breadth of India, albeit only among small sections in each province or State?

How could common national aims and aspirations, have been forged except by that common language in the times and the circumstances in which Indi found themselves?

I need hardly refer to thoughts and ideas of Democr or Swaraj which were imbibed our illustrious leaders of old fr a rich and inspiring literature that language. Today it is not language of any nation or of imperial power. It is the langu through which knowledge modern science, technology, me cine and various other subject most widely communicated.

I feel that we are shutting door against this vast treas house of knowledge, shutting door against progress itself banning the study of English.

I have expressed my belief in spread of the knowledge of national language throughout land, by methods which are p suasive and not dictatorial, and a genuine attempt at understan ing the difficulties and limitati temporary perhaps, of those w have not had the good fortune having their mother-tongue Hi

I am equally convinced that the colleges an adequate knowle of English should be consid essential so that the scientific a professional courses of study m continue to be properly understo for many years more.

(From the Address delivered the Convocation of the B University, 13th March 1954).

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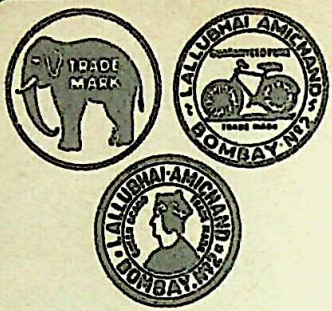

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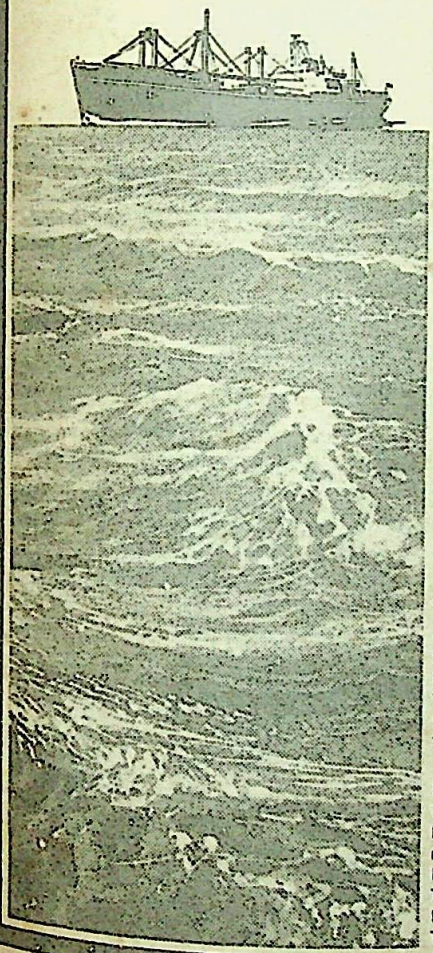

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He wove the fabric of unity.

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MAFATLAL GROUP

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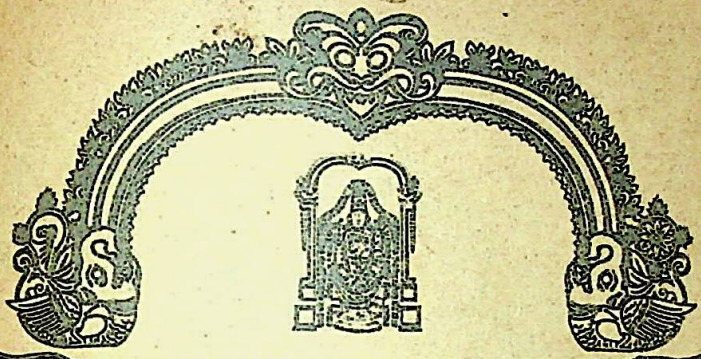

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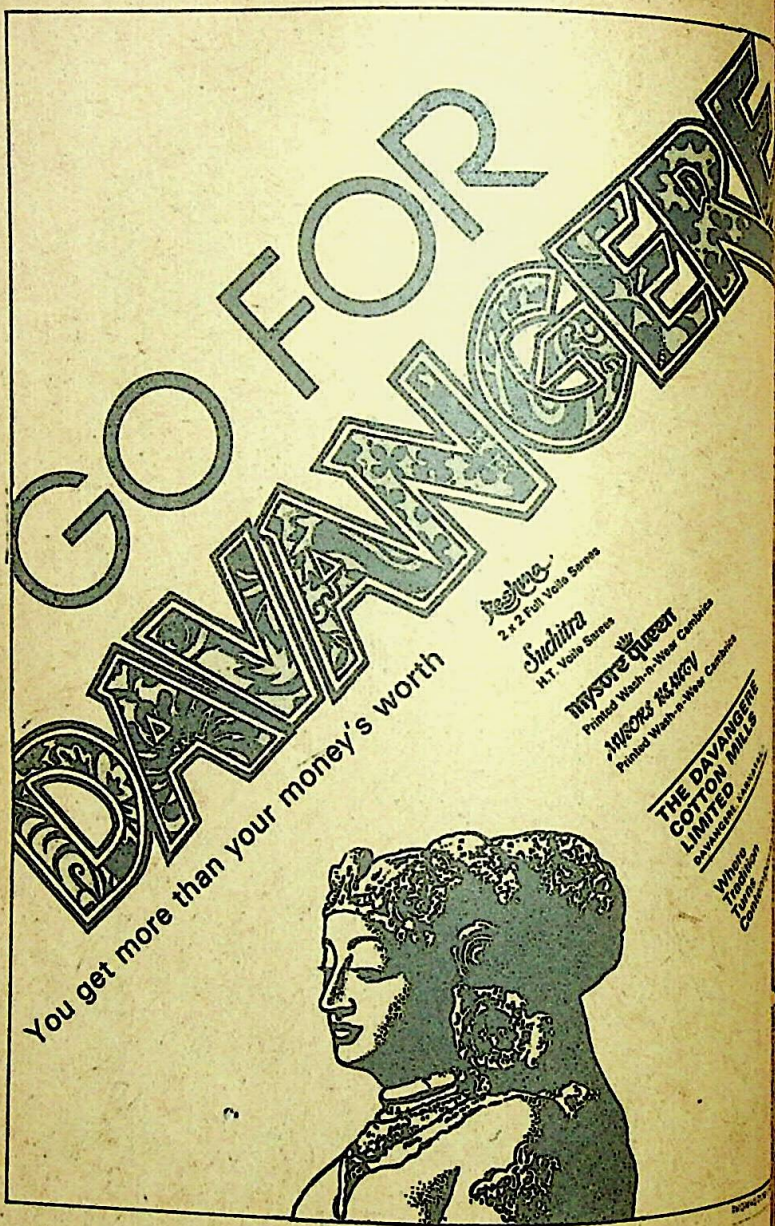
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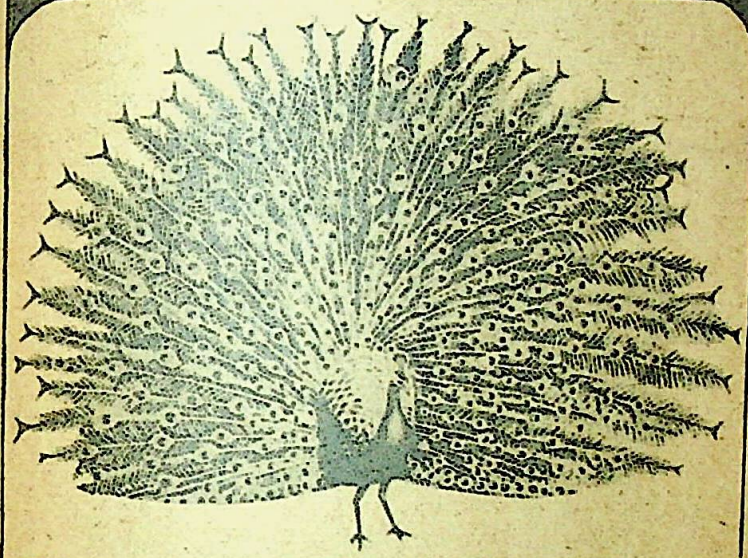

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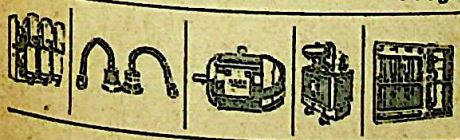

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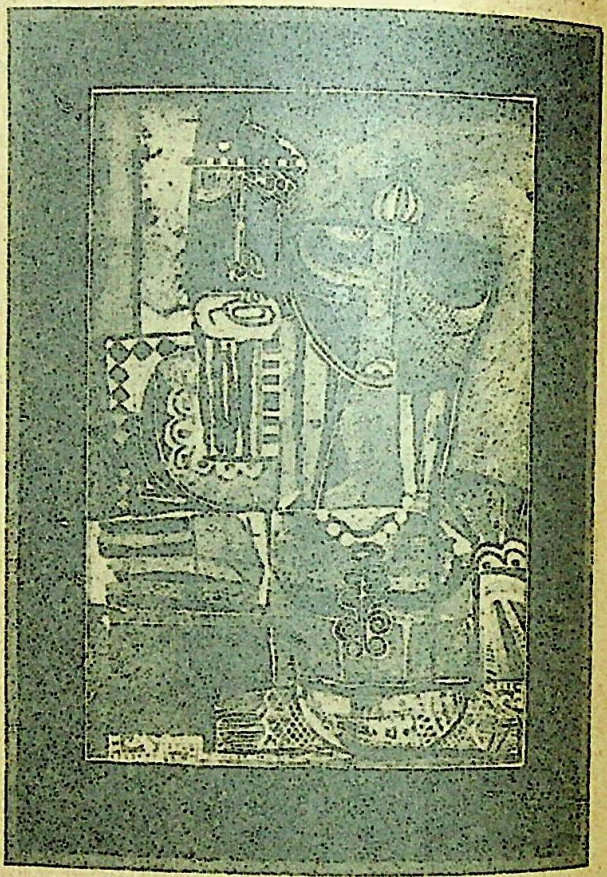

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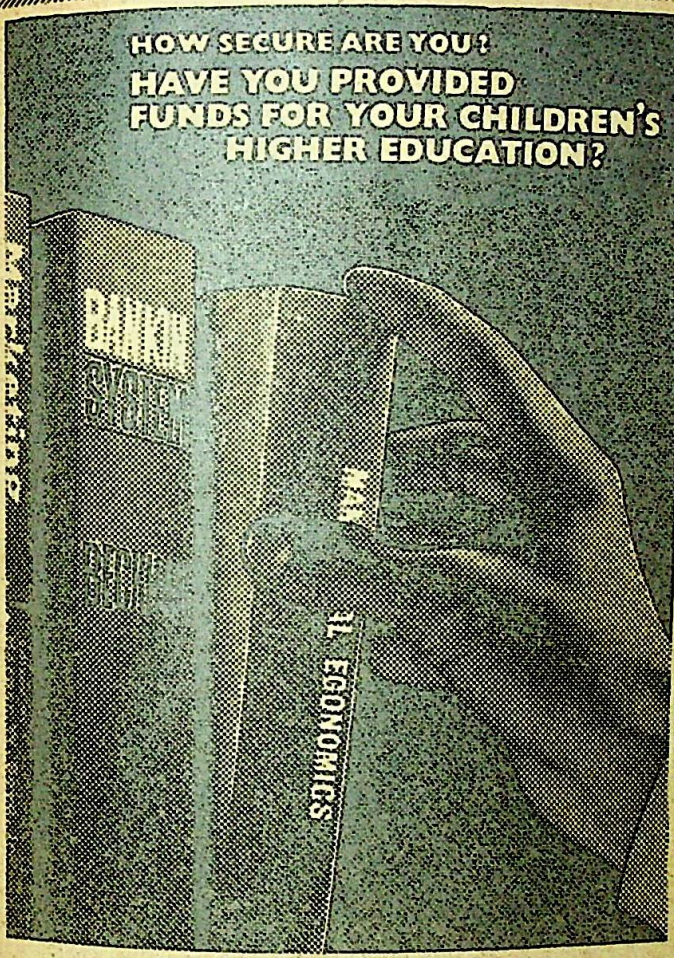

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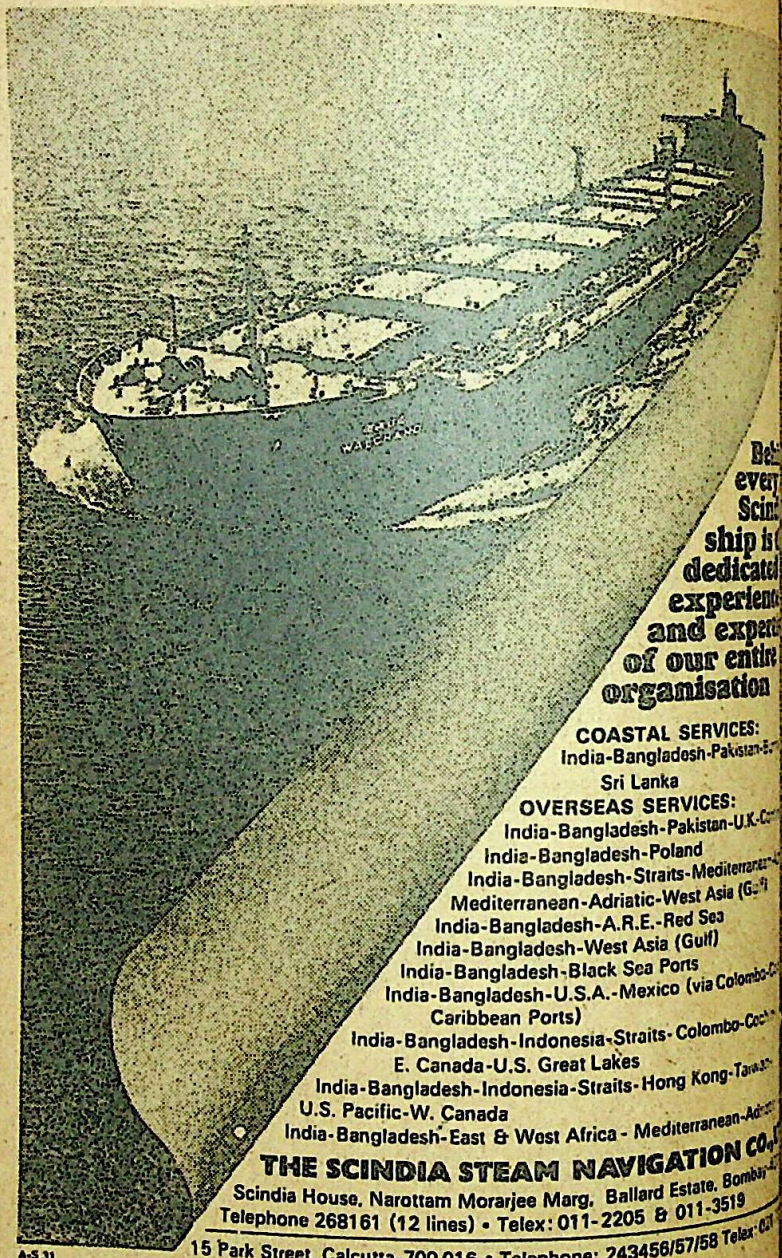

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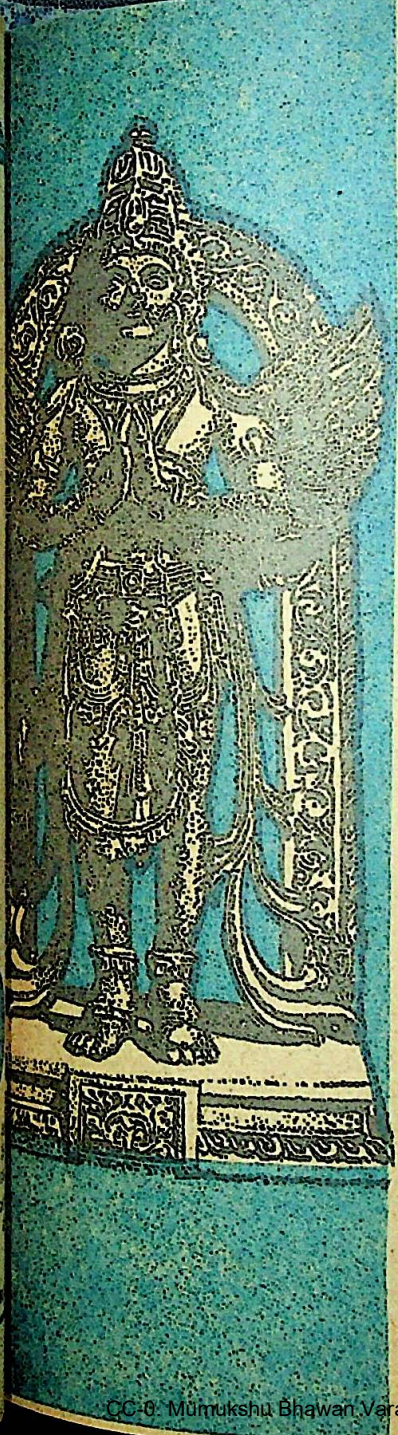

VOL. XXII, No. 24

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।
Let noble thoughts come to us from every side
Rigveda I-89-i

BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

PRAYER FOR RIGHT PATH

स्वस्ति पन्थाम् अनु चरेम सूर्याचन्द्रमसाविव ।
पुनर् ददताऽघ्नता जानता संगमेमहि ।।

We shall follow the path of righteousness
like the sun and the moon;
We shall associate again with the
liberal, the kind, the knowing.

—*Rigveda* V, 51-15.

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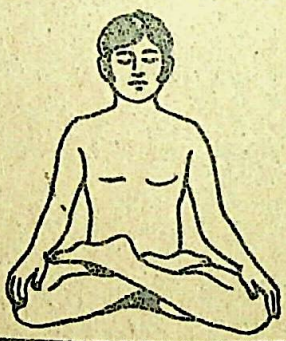

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Kulapati Vani

Intellectual Arrogance

NOT to believe in God or to be indifferent to His existence is accepted as a badge of superiority in these days.. This arrogance is the heritage of the dogmas which the nineteenth century western scientists accepted for themselves till Einstein came and blew them up.

"I assert," he once said, "that the cosmic religious experience is the strongest and the noblest drawing force....My religion consists of a humble admiration for illimitable superior spirit who reveals Himself in the slightest details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds."

I began my intellectual life the same way. When in the college I studied the French Encyclopaedists, I drew up a number of reasons why God cannot exist. A little later, I began to entertain doubts about my dogmatic denial. But I was most arrogant where I should have been most humble. I thought that the search for God requires less effort than learning how to play cards.

I took 12 years of education to get a degree; I spent 15 more years to be a good lawyer. But in matters of God I wanted the results now and here. I wanted miracles to convince me and no trouble on my part.

Slowly and humbly as I proceeded in my little efforts, I learnt that God has no mercy for the arrogant, the vain and the self-complacent. This arrogance is encouraged in India by the perverted sense in which Yoga is understood. Most people believe that anyone who dresses in saffron robes and can talk rapidly of the other world is a Yogi.

Yoga is often taken to be *Hatha-yoga*, but that physical aspect of Yoga is no more than a training for the great mental and spiritual effort of the Yoga, and not even indispensable for it. □ □ □

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The Delhi Kendra of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, of which Bhavan's Vice-President Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi is the Chairman, recently felicitated Dr. P. B. Gajendragadkar on the occasion of the completion of his 75th year.

The memorable speech then delivered by the eminent jurist and Vedic scholar is being reproduced here along with his introductory remarks which reveal his close association with the Bhavan since the days of its founding-father and which has prompted him to be in charge of one of the new projects of the Bhavan, namely, the bringing out of a critically edited edition of the major Upanishads.—*Ed.*

Message of the Upanishad

DR. P. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR

I am grateful to you all for having assembled here to participate in the function which Hathiji has organised in my honour. Though I am not a formal member of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, I belong to the Bhavan's family and, ever since I retired in 1966, I have participated in many of its functions.

Munshiji was very kind to me and Hathiji has been a personal friend for several years. In a sense, this function is a domestic function and since you, Mr. Vice-President, have spared time to associate yourself with it, and you, gentlemen, have assembled here to give me your best wishes, to all of you I wish to offer my grateful thanks.

Hathiji has just told you that I have accepted the invitation of the Bhavan to be in charge of one of the new projects which the

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Bhavan has undertaken, namely, to publish critically edited editions of the major Upanishads.

When I accepted the invitation, I knew that I was living in the declining twilight of the late evening of my life and yet, the words of justice Holmes inspired me not to deny myself the privilege of undertaking this important work. This is what Justice Holmes said: "Riders in a race do not stop short when they reach the goal. There is a little finishing canter before coming to a standstill. The race is over, but the work is never done while the power to work remains." Hathiji has asked me to speak a few words on the message of Upanishads today. It is so difficult to compress in a short speech even briefly the essential elements of the philosophy of the Upanishads. However, Hathiji's request is a command and I comply with it and proceed to make a few observations on the subject suggested by Hathiji.

THE word 'Upanishad' literally means sitting near: this shows the spiritual intimacy between the student and the teacher who sat near each other and carried on a given subject and the student raising questions or queries about that theory.

The period of Upanishads can be roughly stated to be post 1000 B.C. and prior to the Buddhist era of the 5th or 6th century. The Vedic period is 4000 B.C. to 1000 B.C. and the Upanishads have been composed after the end of the Vedic period and before Buddha preached his philosophy. There are in all about 108 Upanishads, 10 of which are regarded as major Upanishads. In that sense, Upanishads are called Vedantas which means the conclusions of the Vedic philosophy.

Whereas the Vedas are primarily concerned with the description and worship of nature and the gods described in the Vedas and Varuna, Indra, Vayu and Agni and whereas Brahmins merely concentrated on the rituals and the performance of scarifices, Upanishads devoted themselves solely to the discussion of philosophical problems. In that sense, it can be safely said that the period of the Upanishads is the most glorious period in the history of Hindu culture. As Mr. Bloomfield has observed; "There is no important form of Hindu thought, not excluding heterodox Buddhism,

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which is not rooted in the Upanishads."

Upanishads are mainly concerned with the fundamental philosophic issue of the search of truth. Truth is of two kinds: material—Satya—and ethical—Rita. यद्भूतहितमत्यन्तं तत्सत्यमिति धारणा That means Satya tries to find out the material truth which leads to the larger good of the largest number, whereas Rita is inspired by a spirit of inquiry into the ethical and fundamental basis of the universe, अथातो ब्रह्म जिज्ञासा which is a Sutra in the Brahma-Sutras as the starting point of all the philosophical discussion in the Upanishads.

Upanishads do not purport to propound a consistent dogmatic philosophy. Their conclusions are tentative or provisional and, in some cases, one conclusion may not correspond to another conclusion. They amount to a continuous dialogue between persons who are in search of truth. All those who took part in this dialogue were fully conscious of the Vedic saying एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति "Truth is one, but wise men describe it differently."

Once a seeker for truth fully recognises that truth is one, but wise men describe it differently, he is bound to develop tolerance and humility. Tolerance in this context is the homage which the finite human intelligence offers to the inexhaustibility of the Infinite.

The discussion in the U shads sometimes discloses a tude of scepticism; but scep is in most cases a prelu rational faith. How scepti ancients could be will be illus by a Sukta called the Nas *Sukta* in the IXth Mandal this Sukta, the author tri answer the question about origin of the Universe. A examining several hypothes says:

योऽस्याध्यक्षःपरमे व्योमन् सो अङ्ग वेदयदि "I wonder whether He who i garded as the Creator and P dent of the Universe himse Omniscient."

Since the discussion in the U nishads proceeds on the ba an irrepressible spirit of in and is inspired by a sense of h lity, all good thoughts fr quarters are welcome and e point of view is formulated discussed. आ नो भद्रा क्रतवो यन्तु appears to be the unwritten c of the Upanishads.

The object of the discussi the Upanishads is contained i well-known passage of *Brihad nyaka Upanishad*:

असतो मा सद्गमय
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय
मृत्यो र्मा अमृतंगमय

"Lead me from darkness to from falsehood to Truth, from death to Immortality."

Broadly stated, the scope of inquiry and the discussion of Upanishads centres round eternal questions which

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haunted and will continue to haunt sensitive human minds.

How was this Universe created? Is there a Creator? Is the creation of the Universe based on any principles? Or as the *Brahma Sutras* say, is it just an act of sport on the part of providence? Is there birth after death?

After discussing the various aspects of these complex, complicated eternal queries, the Upanishads advise every one in the words of *Katha Upanishad*:

"Awake arise and find the truth from wise people."

There is no facet of philosophic discussions which is not to be found in the Upanishads. Their sweep is large. The horizon which Upanishadic debate has placed before it is very wide and the different thoughts expressed about the mystery of the Universe and problems allied to it are inspiring. In fact, it will be no exaggeration to say that the essence of Hinduism in its truly inspiring form is to be found in the 10 major Upanishads.

May I conclude with the observation that whether it is a study of the Upanishads and the philosophic problems discussed by them, or whether it is a study of the social, economic or political problems in which we are today interested, the message of the Vedas is equally relevant and important. That message is:

संगच्छध्वम्, संवदध्वम्
सं वो मनांसि जानताम्
समाना हृदयानि वः

□ □ □

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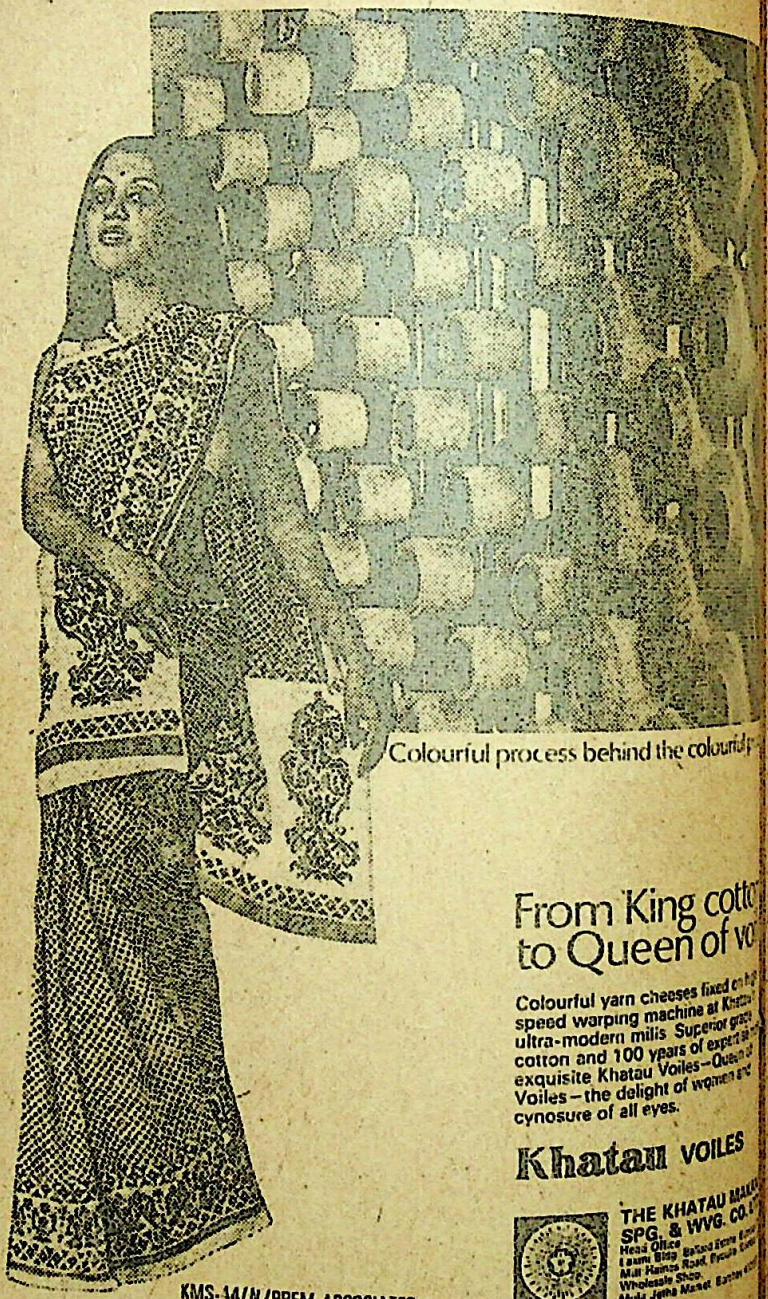
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Let every husband see a Helen's beauty in his wedded wife. In this lies the happiness and sanctity of home life and the moral order of the world.

TWO CHALLENGES

T. R. RAJAGOPALA IYER

STRIKING parallels are found regarding human nature and its reactions all the world over. One such occurs in the case of injured love in the English poet Tennyson and the other in the Sanskrit poet Valmiki.

Paris was the son of King Priam of Troy. Hearing a prophecy that this child was going to be the cause of the destruction of his citadel of Troy, the King abandoned his offspring in the mountain of Ida where some shepherds discovered him and brought him up as one of themselves.

He was so beautiful that Aenone, a nymph, fell in love with him, they were married and lived happily for some time.

Meanwhile Thetis, a sea-nymph, was married to King Peleus and he had invited the gods and goddesses for the wedding-banquet, except Eris, the goddess of strife and discord. In order to revenge her exclusion, Eris threw on the dining table a golden apple with the inscription "For the Fairest."

Clamour and contention immediately arose among the goddesses assembled, which finally resolved itself into a tie among the three great ones—Hera, wife of Zeus, the ruler of the gods, Pallas, the virgin deity of wisdom, and Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty and love.

Zeus declared that the question should be decided by Paris. The goddesses approached him and tempted him by offering the several gifts which lay in their powers—Hera, by supreme power and sovereignty over men and the earth, Pallas by wisdom, and Aphrodite by "the fairest and most loving wife in Greece."

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Paris fell in to this suicidal bribe offered by Pallas and awarded the apple to her. And Pallas instigated Paris to sail for Sparta where King Menelaus lived with his wife Helen, "a daughter of the gods, divinely tall and most divinely fair."

The royal hosts received their guest hospitably but when Menelaus went abroad, Paris eloped with Helen to Troy and refused to restore her afterwards.

The Greek princes joined together, led an expedition against Troy, and succeeded in entering into it after ten years by a stratagem and destroyed it completely. This is the subject matter of Homer's epic, *Iliad*.

The judgement of Paris, as it was called in Greek literature, is the subject matter of a splendid poem *Aenone* by the English poet Tennyson.

The story proceeds as if it is recounted by the deserted wife Aenone herself. She challenges the statement of Aphrodite to Paris that she will give him "fairest wife in Greece."

Yet, mother Ida, hearken ere
I die.
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I
not fair?
My love hath told me so a
thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for
yesterday,
When I pass'd by, a wild and
wanton pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with
playful tail,
Crouch'd fawning in
weed....

The parallel passage occ
the *Yuddhakanda* of Va
Ramayana, Canto 144. Rava
killed by Rama after a
duel. The numerous wives
Rakshasa hero come walki
the battle-field and bewail
dead lord.

Last comes Mandodari
principal consort, and her
tation is one of the best pi
literature in the world.

She says:

सन्त्यन्याः प्रमदास्तुल्यं रूपेणाच्-
विद्धि
अनङ्गदशमापन्नस्त्वं तु मोहान्
बुध्यसे ॥

न कुलेन न रूपेण न दाक्षिण्येन
मै
सदृशिका वा तुल्या वा त्वं तु
मोहान्न बुध्यसे ॥

Oh Ravana! Thou hadst
with you exceeding Sita in
ness of form, but thou wen
powered by Ananga or the
of Love, and discerned it
your blind infatuation. N
in the point of high birth nor
ness of form, nor womanly
and courtesies was Maithili
superior unto me; nay nor
equal unto me. But you disc
it not in your blind infatuati

Aenone and Mandodari were commonly fair. The former the acknowledgement of himself, and another instance

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the strange and striking power of beauty even over wild animals.

Mandodari simply affirms her beauty and does not stop to furnish any illustration.

Valmiki or we could easily supply it by citing how Hanuman himself first mistook her for Sita herself in the *Sundarakanda*.

But Aenone's face could never equal "the face that launched a thousand ships" nor that of Mandodari which brought the conflagration of the sea-girt citadel of Lanka and the destruction of the invincible Ravana and the entire Rakshasa race.

Is it mere vanity then? Not entirely; put it to that last and secret infirmity of all women to be considered fair, a very legitimate and excusable desire, a noble pique, you may call it. The disregard of the sanctity of this by the false lovers, Paris and Ravana, led to the tragic end of their lives.

Had they remained the original lovers they were, and sincere to themselves and to their beloveds, they would have beheld with the discerning eye of love the true and supreme beauty that defied comparison, but alas, as Mandodari says, urged by Ananga's guilty passion, they got infatuated and paid the penalty for it.

There are occasions when it is permissible for a man to proclaim his eminence and his qualities; a Sanskrit sloka lists the occasions.

Tennyson and Valmiki declare in their poems that it is equally permissible for an injured woman to proclaim her beauty. To consider herself the fairest of women should not be considered as an infirmity of injured women only but the legitimate right of every woman.

A lover and husband should see a Helen's beauty in an Egypt's brow, in the face of his beloved. "Take pleasure in your legitimate wife or wives," admonishes Sita to Ravana.

In this lies the happiness and sanctity of home life and the moral order of the world. □ □ □

STRENGTH

He who conserves his mental forces also conserves his physical forces. The strongly quiet, calm man lives to a greater age, and in the possession of better health, than the hurrying, noisy man.

Quiet, subdued mental harmony is conducive to physical harmony —health. The followers of George Fox are to-day the healthiest, longest-lived, and most successful portion of the British community, and they live quiet, unostentatious, purposeful lives, avoiding all worldly excitements and unnecessary words. They are a silent people, all their meetings being conducted on the principle that "silence is power."

—James Allen

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Chiranjeevi Vibhishana

CHAPTER FIVE

1

IT is not my intention to write a detailed account of the war in all its violence, cruelty and bloodshed. There is no pleasure for me in recapitulating the merciless slaughter of my own kith and kin day after day; for once war was declared, Rama showed no mercy and I learnt to understand another side of his character. The destruction of the Rakshasa race was his mission and he carried it out with calculated thoroughness. There were, of course pathetic, tragic and even tender mo in the war, but these were allowed to influence the ul result.

It is impossible for me to about these tragic events w grief and without pity, bu were to do so, some will say hypocritical. On the other I cannot write as if I was cipating in a war against enemy whom I hated and wh could have destroyed without qualms. I am therefore des

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AN IMAGINARY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PADMA BHUSHAN K. SREENIVASAN

ing only those sections of the war in which I myself had some part. I will be as brief as possible in linking these to form a coherent whole.

Of course, I did not do any actual fighting. I had never been a warrior and my personal contribution in actual warfare would not have amounted to anything. Further, it was quite likely that some of the Rakshasa chiefs might have wanted to kill or at least maim me in order to gain favour with Ravana. Therefore Rama instructed me not to expose myself to unnecessary danger. On the other hand, my knowledge of Rakshasa magic and strategy enabled me to give useful suggestions on the methods we ourselves had to adopt in some critical battles of the war. The weapons by which the various Rakshasa chiefs were likely to fall were known to me and I passed on this information to Rama and Lakshmana at the appropriate time. I

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venture to think that this was one of the factors that effectively turned the war in our favour and ultimately enabled us to win.

2

The first major battle was started by Indrajit. He came out of the gates of Lanka with a huge army and a bitter battle was fought between the Vanaras and the Rakshasas in which many people died. It was interesting to watch the methods of fighting adopted by the two sides. The Rakshasas had a lot of conventional weapons such as bows and arrows, swords, maces and clubs which they used with skill acquired as a result of long years of training. The Vanaras on the other hand used only stones and rocks, branches of trees and occasionally, they would wrestle. One would have expected the trained Rakshasa soldiers to gain the better of the Vanaras in no time. But the Vanaras were so quick in their movements, so agile in avoiding the Rakshasa thrusts and so accurate in aiming their own missiles that they often got the better of their enemies. The chariots used by the Rakshasas were often unwieldy and their armour cumbersome so that the Vanaras could aim their missiles and disappear before the Rakshasas could string their bows. Often, when one Vanara was fighting a Rakshasa, another would climb on to the enemy's chariot without his knowledge and kill him or at least injure him. The Rakshasas found that the Vanara methods of fi ing were most irritating and were not able to put their sk the best possible use.

Indrajit's immediate obje was to kill or capture Angada had humiliated Ravana by s ing away his crowns. Thou did not succeed in doing s wrought great havoc in the nara army. Because of his m cal powers, he was able to flaming arrows with great acc while he himself was inv behind clouds of smoke. R and Lakshmana could not their arrows because, their e was invisible. It was at this when Rama and Lakshmana somewhat confused that In aimed his 'noose of snakes' was a magic dart that multi itself into numerous serpe These serpents, with fla tongues lashed themselves Rama and Lakshmana. T hands and feet and throat tightly entwined and they lay l less on the battle-field.

The Vanara army wailed Indrajit returned to report t father of his success. Sug Angada and other Vanara were in tears and wondering to do.

I was not aware of all this was in a different part of battle-field, but knew somet was wrong when I heard the of the Vanara army. I hurr back and knelt before the prost form of Sri Rama. "How am I

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live without you, my Lord", I cried. "Of what use are kingdom and glory when virtue is dead?"

"I am sorry I let you down, Vibhishana," Rama spoke slowly. "I promised you your kingdom and I have not fulfilled my promise although you left everything for my sake." He apologised to Angada for having killed Vali and thanked Sugriva for his help and friendship. He gave messages to be conveyed to Ayodhya. Then, he spoke no more.

As the wind blew over his calm and serene face, Rama though he seemed unconscious, remembered Garuda, the divine kite and the killer of snakes. Rama's thoughts must have been conveyed to that bird for soon it came. The serpents loosened their coils and slithered away in fear of Garuda. Within a short time Rama and Lakshmana were well. How we all rejoiced!

After this incident in which we were nearly defeated, I decided to stay by the side of Rama or Lakshmana during the fighting so that I could explain to them the intricacies of Rakshasa magic and deceit. They could then take appropriate counter-measures.

The news of the release of Rama and Lakshmana from the noose of snakes must have cast a gloom over Lanka. A series of chieftains appeared one after another and they were all killed by the Vanara army.

3

It was then that Ravana decided to face the enemy himself. The next day, he marched into the battle-field with a huge army. He was in a golden chariot made by Brahma and resplendent in shining armour. His ten heads bore crowns studded with precious stones. His chariot was full of weapons, lances, clubs, swords as well as bows and arrows of various sorts acquired through penance and strategy. His grandeur dazzled and chilled the Vanara army.

At first Sugriva, then Hanuman and then General Neela fought Ravana, but none could master him. It was then Lakshmana stood in his path and challenged him.

They both fought well. But their arrows, while creating havoc in the opposing armies, could not touch each other. Lakshmana, his anger thoroughly roused, sent an arrow that broke Ravana's bow into two. Immediately, Ravana picked up another and in that short instant, he found that Lakshmana had killed all the eight horses of his chariot, as well as his charioteer. Ravana realised that Lakshmana could not be beaten in archery. So, he threw a magic spear which could not be destroyed by arrows. It hit Lakshmana with such force that he fell down unconscious.

To have carried Lakshmana away into Lanka would have been a great victory for Ravana. But he found that he could not lift

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Lakshmana off the ground. Meanwhile Hanuman came and carried the body of the young hero to Rama where he soon recovered.

Ravana was still on the battle-field in another chariot, challenging all and sundry and killing Vanara soldiers indiscriminately. Rama decided to meet him; but since he had no chariot at his command and to fight from the ground would put him at a disadvantage, he rode on the shoulders of Hanuman.

This was the first meeting between Rama and Ravana. What a contrast they were in appearance as well as in temperament! It was a contrast between simplicity and pride, between austerity and splendour, between right and wrong. Remembering how Hanuman had killed one of his sons in the Nectar grove, Ravana aimed his sharpest arrows at Hanuman. But his darts were destroyed by Rama. One of the celestial weapons aimed by Rama hit Ravana in the chest and he was knocked out.

Rama could easily have killed him then, but he stopped aiming his arrows when he saw that Ravana had fainted and so waited for him to recover. When Ravana recovered consciousness, Rama told him, "My arrows have made you faint. It is against my ethics of warfare to kill an enemy who had fallen unconscious on the battle-field. Therefore, I will not kill you today. But I shall relentlessly destroy you root and branch and shall place Vibhi... on the throne of Lanka." ... these words, he shot a half ... arrow which knocked dow... the ten crowns of Ravana. ... the great Ravana, conquero... the three worlds, left the ba... field, ashamed and crest-falle...

4

I wondered whom Ravana w... send next and was surprise... see the mighty form of Kum... karna emerging from the gate... Lanka; surprised because K... bhakarna slept for six month... a time and I knew he had b... asleep for only less than t... months. According to Brah... prophecy, the day when he ... untimely awakened would be ... day of his death. I loved K... bhakarna deeply, for in spite ... his enormous appetite and ... gence in wine and women, he ... a good Rakshasa and a g... brother. If he had come to ... it was only because of fa... loyalty and patriotism and ... because he thought Ravana ... right in what he had done. K... ing that Brahma's predic... would come true, I was deep... grieved that he should come ... such an untimely end.

When Rama asked who he w... I explained all this to him and ... quested that I may be permitted ... meet him and persuade him ... come to our side. I wanted ... make one last attempt at bring... about peace, for if Kumbhakar... were to come over, then perha...

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Ravana might reconsider his attitude. At least, I wanted to save Kumbhakarna from a premature end, if possible. Rama agreed with me and asked me to speak to him. So I walked alone, unguarded and unarmed, across the bloody battle-field strewn with corpses, to meet my brother.

When Kumbhakarna saw me, he threw away his weapons, jumped down from his chariot and ran across to meet me.

"Vibhishana! Vibhishana!" he cried as he embraced me. "Why have you left the sanctuary of Sri Rama and come to me? Have you too gone mad, dear brother, like the rest of the Rakshasa race? I had hoped that there would be at least one virtuous Rakshasa left alive to expatiate for all our sins. At least, you could perform our funeral rites, if nothing else. Please go to Sri Rama and live, brother."

"Kumbhakarna", I wept. "Sri Rama has crowned me King of Lanka. But I place that crown at your feet, dear brother. You are the elder and you should succeed Ravana, not I." I prostrated before him and touched his feet. "Please take this burden of kingship away from me. And do not waste your might in an unjust cause. Come with me and ask forgiveness of Sri Rama."

"What! Succeed to the throne of my brother?" Kumbhakarna laughed. "Become king and sleep on the throne for six months at a time! No, my dear Vibhishana, I do not want to make myself more ridiculous than I am already."

"Should the entire Rakshasa race be sacrificed because of the sins of one Rakshasa?" I asked.

"Poor Vibhishana!" Kumbhakarna hugged me again. "To you, virtue is the only thing that matters. To me, loyalty to my king and race, and honour as a warrior come before everything else. To return Sita would be a dishonour for the entire Rakshasa race. For me, death is preferable to such an ignominious surrender. I would rather go down in history as a brave warrior killed in battle by a worthy enemy than as one who lived at the mercy of his conquerors. I cannot change my nature any more than you can change yours."

"But don't you realise, you are sacrificing yourself needlessly," I pleaded with him again. "You know that Ravana's cause is lost. And don't you realise how much I love you?"

"Yes, we have always been fond of each other," Kumbhakarna spoke almost to himself. "But we have always been different in our attitude to life. After all, Vibhishana, life is transient; you are here today and gone tomorrow. It is not so important that I should attempt to preserve it at the cost of my honour."

"So, this is the end," I cried.

"This is not the end, Vibhishana", Kumbhakarna laughed again. "Death is not the end.

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Killed by the worthy Sri Rama, I shall go to heaven. And my fame shall shine untarnished as a great warrior as long as Rama's name shall live. After all, many warriors have fought for their causes and won or lost. But not many warriors have fought and died, knowing their cause to be lost. No, this is not the end."

"For me, there is no end," I wept. "For, I am deathless. For me, there is nothing but an eternity of struggle."

"I wonder which of us is the luckier, brother," said Kumbhakarna. "For, my struggle will be over shortly while yours will go on and on. No wonder you take life so seriously." He laughed again. He was so cheerful at the prospect of approaching death.

"If that is your final decision, good bye, dear brother," I cried.

"Good bye, Vibhishana." For the first time I saw tears in Kumbhakarna's eyes. "Do not give up your righteous attitude, whatever the temptation. That is the only thing that will sustain you. And tell Sri Rama that I shall destroy as much of his army as possible before I die. I shall pay my debt to Ravana in full measure."

With tears streaming down my face, I walked back to our lines as both sides got ready for battle.

Kumbhakarna was terrible in the way he fought. It was almost as if he thought people would say that he had not paid his debt to Ravana unless he did maximum damage to the enemy. W... spear and a mace, he k... thousands of Vanaras. G... heroes like Angada and N... were knocked unconscious. E... Hanuman writhed in agony u... his blows. He hit Sugriva with ... iron rod, picked him up and r... ched back to Lanka. But as ... was getting inside the g... Sugriva regained consciousn... bit Kumbhakarna's ears and ... jumped off his shoulders and ... back to us.

Kumbhakarna roared in ... and agony at the pain Sugriva h... caused him. He returned to t... battle-field swearing vengeance ... all. When Lakshmana went ... oppose him, he shouted, "Wh... is your brother hiding? Wh... does'nt he come out and fight?"

So, Rama went out to f... Kumbhakarna. My brother th... challenges at him. "Do not th... of me as one of the other Rakh... sas you have killed so far. I a... the mighty Kumbhakarna. Y... have come all the way from t... kingdom of Ayodhya to find yo... grave on the shores of Lanka."

Stung by Rama's sharp and piercing arrows, he rushed ... Rama with his mace, but t... Vanara chieftains barred his pa... But they could not hold him. S... Rama sent a special arrow—t... weapon of Brahma—which c... off Kumbhakarna's right hand. Undaunted, Kumbhakarna rush... ed at him with a spear in his left hand. Rama cut off that hand as well. Finally,

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special arrow cut off his head. Hanuman picked it up and threw it into the ocean as Kumbhakarna had requested before his death. I shed tears of sorrow for a fond brother and a mighty warrior of the Rakshasa race.

Kumbhakarna was universally loved. His heart was whole. He was not torn by a conflict of duties or a clash of loyalties. Our spies informed us that the whole of Lanka mourned his loss and Ravana himself was prostrate with grief.

5

Having lost his brother, Ravana now sent his sons into battle. They marched into the battle-field in all their magnificence and pride, with shining jewels and golden armour. They hurled abuses at the Vanaras and shot their arrows into the ranks of the Vanara army. The Vanaras threw rocks and stones at them with unerring accuracy. Five of Ravana's sons were killed, one by one.

Only Atikaya, the bravest of them all, remained. He was a great warrior who was equally at home on an elephant, a horse or a chariot. He created terror among the Vanaras and drove straight to where Rama was standing.

"Listen, Uncle!" he addressed me. "You have been righteous and good. Tell me, if I die in this battle, will I go to heavens? Will the Lord look kindly on me?"

"You seem to be virtuous," Rama spoke to him. "If you wish to live, I can make over the kingdom to you and to Vibhishana, after I have slain Ravana."

"I do not want a kingdom," Atikaya shouted back. "What I want is a glorious death. Tell me, whom am I to fight with?"

Just then, Lakshmana came and challenged him. "What, fight this hermit? Have nt you any one better?" Atikaya jeered. "He seems very young."

"Escape from my arrows if you can," Lakshmana shouted and aimed his fiery darts at him. But they proved powerless against his impenetrable armour. At last, I advised Lakshmana to use his Brahma weapon to kill him. Knowing him to be a brave warrior, a virtuous Rakshasa and a loyal son, I wondered to myself, "How many of the brave and good Rakshasas have to die before there is an end to this carnage?"

It was then that Indrajit, the bravest and the most talented of Ravana's sons, came into the battle-field for a second time. Knowing his skill in magic, I had already warned Rama and Lakshmana about him. My warning proved to be correct. He must have performed some special ritual and acquired special tricks, for even with my knowledge, it was not possible for me to find out what he was up to. He came into the battle-field without our knowledge and rained fiery arrows from all directions. He shouted challenges, but his words came from one corner of the sky while

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his arrows came from another. He went from one end of the battle-field to another, from one gate of Lanka to the next, mercilessly slaughtering the Vanara army. Sugriva, Angada and Jambuvan were all lying wounded and writhing in agony. In all this confusion, Rama and Lakshmana were completely paralysed without knowing what to do and I was unable to help them. They aimed their arrows in the direction from which Indrajit's darts were coming, but of course, he was not there.

At last, when the Vanara army was more or less completely annihilated, Indrajit shot two flaming half-moon arrows that knocked Rama and Lakshmana to the ground mortally wounded.

In misery and loneliness, I surveyed the battle-field. There was desolation everywhere; the entire Vanara army had been killed or maimed and Vanaras lay in pools of blood, groaning in pain and bemoaning their fate. Stones and trees used by the Vanaras were scattered everywhere and the burnt out arrows of Indrajit, their magic potency lost, were sticking out of Vanara carcasses. Vultures and other birds of prey hovered over the whole field, waiting to feast on the dead. Those who were uninjured had fled in terror of Indrajit's weapons and they were nowhere to be seen. None of the commanders could be found for they had all been killed or wounded.

On the day Kumbhakarna killed, though I grieved over passing, I could not help a of elation, for victory seemed near. My hopes for estab righteousness in Lanka, my for reforming the Rakshas and bringing them back to the of humanity, my aspirations down in history as a wise and sighted ruler who won the of his subjects through love compassion—all these were to fructify. How long ago that? Hardly two days. W this short space of time, so tragic change had taken place the whole situation. My fri and allies, people whom I and respected in whom I pinned my faith and for wh had given up everything, lay on the battle-field and my were shattered. The shore Lanka was a graveyard, a gra yard of my friends as well as hopes and aspirations. Such the futility of war and its fore

In the ghastly silence of battle-field, gay sounds of m and celebrations floated from hind the turrets and battlements Lanka adding an ironic touch my grief. Yes, there was des tion on the battle-field, and in minds of all virtuous men ever where.

In all this savage butchery Indrajit, I myself was unharm None of my nephew's weap had touched me, possibly beca

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of Brahma's gift of deathlessness. If that were so, then, Hanuman should also be alive, for he too was deathless. So, I searched for him. He was slowly recovering his senses from the blow he had received from Indrajit.

Dusk had fallen. Together, torch in hand, Hanuman and I went slowly round, bending over the bodies of the dead and the dying. Sugriva lay in the dust, surrounded by his soldiers; Angada's body was covered with arrows; Neela lay dead, clutching a huge tree in his hands. At last we came to Jambuvan, the wisest and the oldest of the Vanaras. He was barely conscious.

"Jambuvan, my friend," I spoke to him. "All our friends, including Sri Rama and Lakshmana lie dead or dying, on the battle-field. What are we to do? How are we to bring them back to life? You are the wise one. You must advise us."

"Send Hanuman to the Sanjeevi mountain," Jambuvan whispered. He was barely able to speak. "There, you will find four kinds of plants having four types of medicinal properties. You will recognise them easily because they shine in the dark. They have wonderful powers of all kinds and they will restore the dead to life. But they must be brought here before the night is over."

While Hanuman departed to bring the wonderful, life-giving plants, I kept vigil over the silent battle-field. I could hear the noise of revelry coming from inside the city. I could well imagine the orgies that were going on, almost hear Ravana's boastful words as he praised his wonderful son. I earnestly hoped those boasts would be temporary. I waited and prayed that Hanuman's mission might be successful and our friends might be restored to life before the long, dark, night was over.

It was still dark when Hanuman returned to Lanka with the medicinal plants. It seemed that each of the plants had a property of its own, to heal the wounds, to mend broken bones, to join limbs that were severed and lastly, to restore the dead to life. We went round the battle-field administering the medicines and reviving people. The wounded were healed; the maimed were mended; the dead were brought to life. They all woke up and shook themselves, as if they had got up from a deep sleep.

Everyone thanked Hanuman most profusely. He was embarrassed at the compliments and the words of praise. Sri Rama embraced him warmly. "How can I repay you, my friend," he said tenderly. "What riches can compensate for your help? I will be for ever in your debt."

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As dawn broke over the eastern shore of Lanka, the joyous shouts of the Vanaras drowned the victory celebrations of Ravana and Indrajit.

The spies and watchers on the towers and turrets must have reported what had happened to Ravana, for the noise of the celebrations soon died down, followed by a deathly silence inside. We wondered who would come out to do battle next, but none appeared. And then it was discovered that all the gates of Lanka were barred and bolted from the inside. They were not opened for five days. Ravana had become a prisoner inside his own fort.

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18

Vaakya Vritti

Of Adi Sankaracharya

SWAMI
CHINMAYANANDA

स्वप्न जागरिते सुप्तिं
भावाऽभावौ धियां तथा।
यो वेत्यविक्रियः साक्षात्
सोऽहमित्यवधारय ।।

Swapna jaagarithe suptim bhaa-
va-abhaavau dhiyaam tathaa|
Yo vethya-avikriyah saakshaath-
so-aham-ithyavadhaaraya||

Know yourself to be the One, who is the Changeless Self, that is directly cognised, who is the illuminator of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, and who illumines the appearance and dissappearance of the intellect and its fluctuations. "He am I" (So-Aham).

INTELLECT is ever-changing and, therefore, it is limited. Since it is limited, its knowledge also must be limited. The one whose capacity to know is limited and conditioned, cannot itself be the Pure Knowledge which is Unlimited, Unconditioned, Infinite: the Self.

The One Consciousness ever illumines all experiences in our waking, dream and deep-sleep states. The play of Consciousness is unbroken and continuous– all experiences of waking and dream states, and also 'the absence of experiences' in the deep-sleep-state all shine up into our cognition only when they play in the beam of the Awareness in us. This seat of the ever-bright, ever-shining Consciousness is the Self (*Atman*). It is this Self that knows the 'appearance', of thoughts, and the 'disappearance' of thoughts that is constantly taking place in the intellect. "He am I" (*So-Aham*).

Just as the sun-light is not affected by what it illumines, simi-

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larly, the Consciousness, the Self, is never affected by the fluctuations of our intellect, by the roamings of our mind, and by the tireless wanderings of our senses. The One Self illumines all activities of all equipments in every living creature, all through their waking, dream and deep-sleep states. The same Self illumines the 'disappearance' of all perceptions in all intellects, in the deep-sleep-state. "This One Changeless (*Nirvikara*) Mass of Consciousness (*Caithanya-Ghana*), "The Self, I am"—*So-Aham*—thus assert and realise.

That there is a Self illumining all the Anatma-layers is explained hereunder with a vivid example.

□ □ □

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HINDUISM

in Retrospect & Prospect-3

AS I SEE IT- I

M. ANANTHASAYANAM AYYANGAR

Q. Is the influence of religion over the masses on the wane? If not, how can corruption and such other pointers to widespread deterioration in ethical and moral values be accounted for?

A. The influence of religion on the masses is not on the wane. On the other hand, in spite of modern secular education, the number of visitors to temples is increasing. In 1933 the voluntary offerings by the pilgrims to the temple funds at Tirumala to Lord Srinivasa amounted only to Rs. 3 lakhs. It has increased steadily and is Rs. 12 crores this year. The number of pilgrims visiting the temple has also increased. It is now not less than 20,000 pilgrims a day. The vows that are taken indicate the growth of faith and fervour among the masses. Besides children, men and women alike undergo tonsure. Many pilgrims perform *angapradakshina* (rolling on the ground and performing one to three rounds clockwise round the sanctum-sanctorum at Tirumala). Many walk to the temple ascending steep steps over the seven hills despite the availability of buses and other conveyances. In spite of winter cold, thousands of pilgrims bathe in the Ganga and other holy rivers early in the morning, and the Kumbhamela attracts lakhs of pilgrims.

All the same, if corruption should be on the increase, it is due to a conflict of civilizations and cultures. Western civilization aims at the increase of the standard of living, and scientific and technological efforts are directed towards the production of greater creature comforts. The ideal of service, simplicity and sacrifice which our ancients preached and practised is no doubt waning. The top place in society is no longer given to the Sadhu and Sajjan, but to the men of power and wealth, which classes had been

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given a second and third place in our society. Had Gandhiji been alive, simple living would have been stressed, obviating the need for corruption. The cost of living has increased and along with it the desire for luxuries. Faith in God is not now divorced from faith in the mammon. Our educated people but not the common men or the masses have reconciled both the ways of living and ideals but fortunately, this change has not yet come over the masses in general.

Q. The traditional charge against Hinduism is that it is fatalistic, that it inhibits progress by making people slaves to the belief in the inevitability of whatever is to happen. How far is this charge true? If false, how can the stigma be removed? What is the basis for such an accusation which is being advanced even today by well-meaning, highly educated people?

A. On the other hand, the so-called Fatalism is intended to help an individual to reconcile himself to any evil happenings which occur and are beyond his control. Other religions do not provide a similar consolation. The belief in the theory of Karma is intended to encourage an individual to strive better and act in a proper manner lest his difficulties should be repeated. It is common knowledge that every human being strives his utmost to avoid or get over difficulties when they occur and resigns himself to his fate only after all his attempts prove futile. This faith can also explain the differences between man and man and console him and make him adjust himself to the present situation. Other religions do not preach rebirth of the individual and attribute the differences to the sweet will of God who created him. This will dispute indiscriminate and whimsical action to the Creator himself if no partiality. In the Hindu religion an individual thanks himself for the troubles that he is now undergoing, as having been brought about by his own actions and not by the whims and fancies of others. He can better himself in this life itself or in a future life. This is specifically mentioned in the Gita as follows:

uddharedaatmanaatmaanam
aatmanamavasaadayet|
aatmaiva hyaatmano bandhu-
raatmaiva ripuraatmanah||
Ch. VI.

meaning: "Lift yourself up by your own effort and do not depress yourself. You are your own friend and you are your own enemy," and it goes on to say that you become your friend only when you control your mind by yourself and you become your enemy when you leave your mind adrift. Thus your so-called fate is self-imposed and is not imposed by an outside agency. This theory of Karma and successive births on account of this Karma is one of the main pillars of Hinduism and puts faith and hope in our minds and not despair or idleness. Temperance

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tally we are not worshippers of wealth or luxuries. This conflict between materialism and spiritualism is as old as Hiranyakashipu and Prahlada, if not older still. This is the bane of western society where there is no peace of mind. The conflict between the two ideologies is described in greater detail in chapter 16 of the *Bhagavad Gita* relating to "Daivasura Sampat Vibhaga Yoga."

It is a wrong thing also to say that we believe in Fatalism as inevitable or inexorable. There are three kinds of Karmas which produce results—Agami, Sanchitam and Prarabdham—any one can easily avoid the future results of action by his own efforts (Agami) and prevent the coming ino effect of Sanchita or past Karma. It is only Prarabdha which has started yielding fruit in this life which has to be enjoyed or suffered. This also depends on the intensity of action in the previous life. For instance, a person who is born a woman cannot easily of her will change over to a man. In this case, the previous Karma has started yielding results. These two beliefs—one in Karma and the other in re-birth are the bedrock of Hindu civilization which explain the cause of differences between an individual and another and encourage him to follow a better life so that he may avoid a future life or such difficulties therein. Far from being a depressing factor, the Karma theory has explained the righteousness and justice of God, the Creator who merely gives a body to an individual according to his past Karma. These were the trump-cards by which Swami Vivekananda convinced the Parliament of Religions in Chicago about the soundness of our doctrine.

Q. It is said that the greatest strength of Hinduism is its catholicity, breadth of outlook, but that this is also its greatest weakness in that there is very little common prescribed religious observances, obligatory for all, *as in other religions. Is it necessary and possible to outline certain basic minimum observances for all Hindus?*

A. This charge is absolutely groundless. It is made only by our westernised citizens who are deviating from our ideals of seeing one common spirit in the Universe and that every other person should be treated as oneself. Further, it is advised that a person should have no acquisitive tendencies but only enjoy things of the earth without attachment as they all belong to God who manifests himself in the creation. Even this selfless enjoyment should be made only by persons after rendering their legitimate service to the community which is the manifestation of God. This belief in a single spirit holding the universe together will develop in him an idea of oneness in the universe and will make him love every other person as himself. To a Hindu, God is both immanent in the Universe of

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creation and transcendent beyond it and he is everywhere. Every human being is a moving temple of God to him.

We were one of the two richest countries of the world. Westerners flocked to our country in search of gold, conquered it silently and made us all slaves to their habits and ways of life. We have no doubt got freedom for our country but not yet for our culture which is based on simplicity, service and sacrifice as opposed to the apparently grand materialist style of living of the westerners. Those people who are hankering after the Western standards alone make this accusation. Peace can be obtained in this country only when we live a life of simplicity, service and sacrifice. Those who accuse us are teaching their children English almost as their mother-tongue even from 2½ years of age and before the children can pronounce the words Mata and Pita. The others fought for freedom and led the simple life of Gandhiji. Though we have discarded British rule, we are still following British methods and ideology.

The campaign of diffidence can be thwarted only by educating compulsorily all our children in Sanskrit and Hindu religion and philosophy.

Catholicity and universality are the essential features of Hinduism. Its main theme and real knowledge according to it consists of realisation of one single spirit in the universe, holding the whole universe together. God both immanent and transcen All rituals are intended only fixing a man's mind on the versal spirit which is comm all and which holds all together as limbs of one univ body.

So long as this attitude is d loped the matter of rituals not be our concern. Ritual is necessary for meditation or sation of God. Without two, mere ritual is only a ignoring the substance. U the other religions we do not of the last of the prophets, anybody can reach heaven mere meditation. Even regard meditation, one can meditate the formless Creator and the C tor who has taken form for benefit of his devotees. It is account of this principle of versal application that we h avoided fanaticism and religi wars. A single form of wor was evolved in Sanskrit as Ga and as that language is not taught on a mass scale, each vidual can, according to his ca city, think of God in the abstr or as Rama, Krishna.... Want a single common prayer has affected us through the Rituals will not strengthen as much as a belief in the existe of a universal soul holding all beings together in the form Viswaroopa.

Gayatri may be taught to every one. Gayatri mantra means "that light which illumines

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world through the Sun, let it illumine my mind so that I may be impelled to do my duty." This is enough. The rituals may vary according to one's likes.

"The earliest poetry of India already contains many traces of the essential character of the philosophy of India. In nothing indeed does the continuity of Indian life show itself more strikingly than this: the gods of India change, but the alteration of the higher thought is far less marked. The realisation of oneness in the world is the surest way to maintain universal peace. Attempts to acquisition of wealth or power led to major world wars amongst the Christian nations and led to exploitation of man by man or country by country. Even at the loss of temporal wealth and power, the establishment of peace amongst human beings should be achieved. That is the aim of the Hindu life and philosophy and that alone will sustain the world." (Arthur Berriedale Keith—Chap. 26).

Q. Even a well-read, widely travelled and enlightened Editor like the late Shri Frank Moraes equated Hindu ethos with casteism. Will the fundamental values of Hinduism be in any way affected by the eradication of casteism towards which a concerted effort is being made now at all levels? If Harijans who constitute a sizeable population among Hindus are made to feel that their very religion exposes them to ridicule, how are they to love that religion? In other words, how can all sections of Hindus be made to take equal interest and have the same sense of belonging to Hindu religion?

A. The caste system is a social order intended to remove competition, the struggle for existence, the survival of the fittest and violence from human society. They are the laws of the jungle. Plans are being made for raw-materials and industry but not for personnel. In a capitalistic country, an individual is more important than the society and in a socialistic state the society is all important and the individual must only cater to its needs. This social organisation of the caste system combines both these ideologies. Harijans are not in any of these castes. One of the Tamil Vaishnavaite Alwars or saints is a Harijan, likewise, there is a Shaivaite saint, Shri Nandanar.

There are only four castes and they exist in every society though not hereditarily. This kind of racial distinction is prevalent all over the world. In America the Negro problem is worse. It was left to Gandhiji to lift the Harijans as such with one clause in the Constitution. They are now no worse than the backward classes, whose backwardness can be removed only by economic prosperity. Every kind of special consideration is being shown to them and they are resorting to temples freely. If the caste in India makes

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a man look up, the class distinction in the West makes him arrogant. Slowly the differences will disappear with the growth of economic prosperity and education.

With the expansion of modern education, casteism is gradually receding to the background. Economic differences will persist unless everyone takes to a simple way of life. Then caste also will disappear by itself. No drastic changes by way of legislation can abolish this system. We have already enacted marriage laws and laws of adoption that a person of any caste may marry or adopt a member of any other caste. Temples and public places and public institutions are open to all members of the community irrespective of castes. I think these provisions are enough.

They are no longer ridiculed by anybody. As they grow richer the fusion will certainly take place. Hindu religion will not suffer by the removal of untouchability. With respect to other castes the differences will continue as long as differences of habits and customs persist.

All sections of the society can be made to be proud of Hinduism if the idea of oneness of the universe and the apparent nature of differences is removed by constant propaganda and education.

Q. Swami Vivekananda has given a positive suggestion that one of the best ways for Harijans to command respect among all sections of people is to learn Sanskrit, the study of which is being neglected even by Brahmins today. What incentives can be given to Harijans to learn Sanskrit, the repository of Indian culture and religion?

A. They can be given decent scholarships and in the schools all the subjects may be taught along with Sanskrit to which a larger number of periods may be allotted. In fact Sanskrit may be taught to all sections of the community and for some time large stipends may be given to them. Hindu religion, particularly *Bhagavad Gita* may be taught to them.

(To be continued)

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THE WIDE GOLDEN LAND

JEANINE MILLER

INDIA offers to the visitor a wealth of colourful spectacles—like mother Nature herself so prodigal of her many forms. But underlying this rich diversity of customs, cults, crafts, culinary delights, festivities, racial types and languages, a bond of unity soon becomes apparent, a cultural legacy which, however much it may have absorbed from non-indigenous sources throughout the ages, is uniquely Indian and makes of the sub-continent a single whole in a sense which Europe falls very short of in spite of its 2000 years of common heritage.

Like all other countries India has its numerous problems, not the least being that of poverty. Indeed the first sight that hits the visitor is the crowd of beggars and lepers who immediately beset him and this can be a most traumatic experience. The indifference shown by the more well-to-do classes, an indifference born of sheer self-preservation, is also another factor to be understood. One soon realises that the Indian attitude of acceptance of his condition carries him somewhat smoothly through life, enables him to live more serenely than his European brother, with even a measure of cheerfulness and gives him an innate poise which too many of our Western contemporaries, however much better off, never know, a poise and contentment that come out in the radiant smile of the poor and the humble and those still untainted by the excesses and harshness of Western influence. There appears to be far less pressure upon people in Indian cities than in Europe; time dwindles to timelessness, even taxi drivers wait without charging extra whilst India's famed hospitality is extended to the visitor who is treated according to the ancient tradition whereby "the guest is God"; thus are forged the sacred bonds of friendship.

However, in this land where flowers are so fragant not all is rosy for the visitor. We may say

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Born in China of French parents, Miss Jeanine C. Miller received French education till the age of 12 and then British education in Australia. After getting her B.A. (Hons.) degree from the Sydney University, she taught for two years and then worked as a librarian in Sydney until 1962.

Following the death of her father, a banker, she left Australia for England in May 1962 where she now works and stays.

The reading of "Secret Doctrine" led her to the Vedas and the desire to go directly to the text of the Vedas kindled in her the urge to learn Sanskrit which she began in 1963.

She translated "Isa Upanishad" around 1968 and then embarked on a study of the Rig Veda. In August 1964, she joined the British Museum and is working as a research assistant in the Department of Printed Books.

In 1971 she published, together with George Feuerstein, "A Reappraisal of Yoga," and in 1975, by herself, "The Vedas, Harmony, Meditation, Fulfilment," a book that deals with mythology, meditation and eschatology and criticises Western Interpretation. She favours Aurobindo's approach and has dedicated the book to Dr. J. Gonda, "the one Western scholar who shows a deeper understanding."

She feels that the message of the Vedas is "a message as meaningful and relevant today as in the past," and is keen on contributing to the awakening of the Western academic world to this message. She is also equally interested in contributing "a little" to the deeper understanding of Sanatana Dharma by the Western world.

that when we admire a rose and inhale its perfume we forget about its thorns. Nevertheless the thorns are there and sometimes they prick. Hinduism proclaims that the divine spark, the Atma, abides in every being, that we are thereby fundamentally one, "That thou art." Does not the *Bhagavata Purana* itself also warn: "that man of invidious perception who draws the line between himself and another, him death pursues with his dangerous fear." For one whose life-long study is India's religious philosophy, to visit a

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temple is an act of homage. Such a one is shocked at being refused admittance in certain temples of the North, the East and the West, only because of his non-Hindu face, whereas some of his Hindu younger generation friends who may of course go in are not bothered because they have lost touch with their ancient faith. The house wherein the Deity is worshipped should be opened to everyone who has respect for it. Perhaps in these particular temples the visitor is still a "mlechcha," although elsewhere he is "guest" and therefore "god."

It is also rather sad to see too many of those presiding over institutions avowedly established with the aim of guiding their inmates towards a living realisation of true spiritual values, far more concerned with the business side of running them, or the physical security they offer, than anything else. Nevertheless there are still some ashrams, notably one at Hardwar, that are standing witnesses to the truth that if you seek first the kingdom of heaven all these things shall be added unto you.

India is a land of extreme contrasts. One constantly oscillates between the opposite poles in every domain of life: on the one hand dilapidated buildings and on the other opulent monuments such as the Taj Mahal and South Indian temples; overcrowded city streets with indescribable medleys of humans, buffaloes, monkeys and engines of all types, all billowing from every direction, sending one's heart in one's mouth at every turn for fear of an accident which never seems to materialise and the vast empty spaces of the countryside stretching endlessly, stretching to infinity, silent and golden under the December sun; the ancient method of handing down knowledge by word of mouth contrasted with the most modern libraries, particularly that of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research which, thanks to its head librarian, is a model of efficient organisation, up-to-date information, orderliness and cleanliness; the highest spirituatily that draws men together to the oneness of their ultimate source, as taught in the *Upanishads* and lived by the saints, and the extraordinary taboos and separativeness that divide man from man and all too often breed suffering and strife; the call of the flesh crying out its needs and desires, pains and elations and the call of the spirit, unobtrusive yet insistent, voicing the eternal quest for the Absolute. All this may be summed up in those two contrasts of Indian religion: the ONE without a second of Advaita, the ONE "whose shadow is death, whose shadow is immortality" of the *Rigveda*, and the 33 crores of gods! Bewildering and magnificent!

Such polar opposites are not to be found in the West or even in the Middle East. They belong peculiarly to India and give this

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ancient land a unique vitality rooted in an age-old tradition where blended the temporal and the spiritual, where the earthly and the divine met in an explosion of dynamic life, which found one of its richest outlets in art. Artistic heritage is an eloquent pointer to the achievement of a civilization. In this realm, as in that of religious philosophy and literature, India towers very high. If the visitor can do nothing else he can turn to the great monuments and will receive more than enough to fill his days with admiration.

A perfect example of this union of the sacred and the secular rendered with a warmth of feeling unsurpassed in later ages may be seen in the Ajanta cave paintings. These gracefully depict the sensuous delights and fullness of daily life during the Gupta dynasty (4th to 6th c. A.D.) side by side with the more austere ideals of the spiritual life as preached by the Lord Buddha and made visible by the palette of the artist in his delineation of divine beauty. The senses and the spirit achieve here a union which defies verbal analysis.

The Hindu temple is a vision in stone, the vision of the chariot of the sun as at Konarak, or of the universal tree of life as at Bhuvanesvara, but above all the grand vision of archetypal Man, Purusha, the vision of human aspiration to the supreme Reality beautifully embodied in the *sikhars* that soar, eagle-like, to the sky. The temple of Kailasa at Ellora, stands for ever a glorious witness to man's invincible spirit that thought nothing of attacking the solid mountain rock, of hewing it out into a vision of dynamic life with its flights of fancy and godly beauty. The profound metaphysics of Hindu thought so skilfully concealed within the legends of the more popular cults are fixed there, carved in stone, challenging us to pause and reflect upon life's significance, to wonder and marvel at the hand that chiselled such meaningful panels, friezes and dreams!

Among the shrines of southern India, the Halebid temple emerges solitary upon a high, star-shaped platform, commanding the plains that shimmer away all around. A whole, complex, civilization, as portrayed in its myths and philosophy, in its gods and heroes, looms before one's eyes, sculptured to the most minute detail, the walls covered from top to bottom with tiers upon tiers of figures depicting legendary times. One gazes amazed at such cascades of figures leaping out of the rock as though to pursue their avocation. Similar profusions of shapes, celestial, human and animal, springing up in their teeming thousands, characterise other ancient Hindu temple sculptures, but one of the most dynamic expressions of the inexhaustible force exploding to myriad-faceted life may be seen in the magnificent granite of the Descent of the

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Ganges at Mamallapuram, superb testimony of the boundless energy, prolific imagination and unsurpassed mastery of the artists! What power could give to stone such irresistible movement driving all things forward even as the Ganges that tumbles from heaven through Shiva's locks in a frenzy of joy right to earth?

Even so does life relentlessly drive all things onwards. What revelation of the mightiness of the human spirit that conceived the masterpieces and triumphantly expressed thereby the infinitude of Deity by means of the plenitude of matter that nevertheless limits it! Nothing short of divine inspiration could mould stone into the serene gaze, the illumined radiance of its Buddhas and Maheshvaras or the timeless quiescence of its Vishnus reclining upon the serpent of eternity; or bronze into the swaying limbs and whirling motion of its Natarajas, the Lord of the Cosmic Dance whose burning, fearsome dance creates the universe, whilst he remains poised for ever within and above and beyond the illusion of time!

SAINTS

The richness, the profundity of India's spiritual heritage finds its holiest expression in the lives of her saints who still walk upon her dusty roads. To meet one such is an experience worth a thousand books and a thousand relics.

As the Kannada poet Basavanna sang, a temple that can move and not merely stand, that can become, that can do and not merely be, is far greater than any made of stones, for it is the living sanctuary of the Lord. But he who is sensitive enough may absorb from the soil, from the sky, from the glow of sunrise and sunset, an elusive something, may feel the air charged with contemplation, may vibrate to the call of inner exploration, may rise to those Himalayas of vision of which the earthly Himalayas are the image, may commune with those holy souls who have hallowed the banks of the Ganges, the jungle fastnesses and the tombs of saints. "There", as Kalidasa wrote of his cloud messenger, "with a devotee's reverence soar thou on, circling round the rock-dinted foot-print of the Crescent-crowned One"—till the very Mount Kailasa itself is reached, the mount of liberation!

Not only are the pilgrimage resorts conducive to recollection. India has her holy cities such as Benares, the enchanted queen of the East. Each dawn, as life awakens, Surya "the far-sighted, golden gem of the firmament" bathes each *ghat*, each building and each creature in his own translucence, and each night all fades away to sleep to the music of a hundred temples, cradled by the rhythm of the Ganges. Standing upon its bank, listening to echoes of an ever-abiding past as they mingle with the present, one merges into the soul of India. Who

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can give voice to the subtle throb of that soul? Perhaps only the Indian flute. For the Indian musician has translated into yearning melodies, into heart-wringing accents, that eternal longing of the human for the divine, that challenging cry of the Upanishads for light, for knowledge, for truth!

One evening, by the side of the sacred river Tunga, when the hush of twilight descended on earth, when the stars began to twinkle at their own reflections in the water, the depths of the sky opened their gateway; beyond the bridge "that neither day nor night can cross, nor old age nor death nor sorrow" (*Chhandogya Upan.*) quivered the spirit of eternity, welled up the bliss of pure being, melting all into the very flame of Agni; Agni who burns up all dross and raises mortals to highest immortality, inspirer, guide and "vehicle of the transcendent," my beacon and my lord; Agni the sacrificial fire still kindled as of old, began his magic work; and the heart of India mysteriously throbbed in my heart and the stars sang in my ears; soon their song swelled and merged into the chants of the Vedas, the most holy chants on this earth, still handed down from generation to generation since immemorial times; still taken up and repeated, as of old, from plain to mountain, from earth to heaven, from sphere to sphere, by those celestial singers whom human ears do not hear but human soul may sense, hallowing with their sacred vibrations, their haunting melodies, the land of the Rishis, the land of the golden spaces. □□□

"Never say, 'No'; never say, 'I cannot', for you are infinite. Even time and space are as nothing compared with your nature. You can do anything and everything, you are almighty".

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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The Invisible Host

KUM. BHAGIRATHY SUBBIAH

पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणं
पुनरपि जननीजठरे शयनम्
इह संसारे बहुदुस्तारे
कृपयाऽपारे पाहि मुरारे

Born again and again, dying
Over and over again,
And getting into a mother's
Womb over and over again,
It is hard to cross over this ocean
of repeated life and death,
Save me from it, Merciful
Lord!

thus pleads Sri Sankara in his *Bhaja Govindam.*

A life full of happiness, without any tinge of sorrow, would never make a human life. In our day-to-day life we experience the transitoriness and impermanence of every particle that exists in this world. Beautiful flowers smiling in the morning sun fade away before nightfall. We are shocked at the death of a companion whom we had visited only few hours ago. There was a time when no medicines were available for typhoid and some other diseases. Now we find cancer to be a dreadful disease for which there is no remedy yet. Human beings, with all their intelligence and reasoning stand baffled at the mystery of Nature.

The rainbow with its seven colours, the beautiful colourings of birds and insects, plants blooming with flowers at different seasons, the springing up of huge trees from a very minute seed—all these can never be the work of mortals. Even eminent painters who claim to depict realities of Nature can hardly be proud of their so-called 'creation.' Our most beautiful paintings resemble the beauties of Nature but can hardly equal the grandeur par excellence that is God's creation. Just as the child when it perceives a computer is unable to comprehend the brain of the man behind it, so we are blind to the existence of the 'Divine Architect' who is behind the mystery and wonders of Nature.

I may mention here a simple illustration which a learned Swamiji gave in the course of a lecture. A guest enters a 5-star Guest House, say of an Indus-

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trialist, and finds that all amenities like carpets, air-conditioner, telephone, and T. V. are provided there for him. Attendants look after him and serve him with delicious food and drinks. At the same time, the guest seldom sees the host. Every time he sees an attendant he feels the presence of his host who has been responsible for all the amenities. On the day of departure, he leaves the Guest House but the same attendants who were at his beck and call all along will not allow any of the amenities to be taken by him.

Similarly, our world is a 'million-star' Guest House into which we all have come as guests. We are born naked and go back naked. In the course of our existence we develop attachments, amass wealth, acquire possessions etc., but at the time of departure, we leave this world with none of the so-called possessions accompanying us. God, like the host, is invisible, but all the amenities we find in this world are proof of his existence.

Due to ignorance, we are unable to recognise these facts of life. If we make sincere attempts, we can feel His existence in our innumerable activities. God has so graciously endowed on us the unique privilege to comprehend his manifestations and to escape from the cycle of birth and death. Hence it is within our reach and we should take the maximum advantage in our present birth to attain the goal set for us.

One need not have to renounce this world for God-realisation. Spiritual enlightenment is very much possible here and in this life. Freedom from ignorance can be attained in our own way of life. Realisation of truth and worldly life are not opposed to each other.

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन
सर्वमिदं ततम्।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं
विन्दति मानवः॥

He from whom all beings arise and by whom all this is pervaded —by worshipping Him through the performance of his own duty does man attain perfection—Gita.

All of us have been sent forth by the 'creator' to accomplish some task or the other. Like actors on the stage, we have 'assigned roles' to perform in the drama of life. Actors cannot change the course of the play but have to play the role ear-marked for them by the conductor. Similarly, every one of us make our 'entrance' at the destined time, perform our task and make our 'exit' at the appointed hour. We all have some personal and social duties to render for our own self-development and for the betterment of the society of which we are a part and parcel. By performing such duty with mental detachment, without any regard for the fruits of action, we help in turning the wheel of the world

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which has been set in motion by the Governor of the Universe.

How can we develop detachment? Tiruvalluvar in his famous *Kural* shows the way:

'Let attachment to Him who has no attachments be your one attachment. That attachment will help you free yourself from other attachments.' He who has no attachments is God. Through devotion to Him, one can develop detachment towards worldly objects. With devotion in heart, one should do one's duty and surrender the fruits to Him. If the fruits are offered to some living beings, the question of propriety will arise. But fruits offered to God do not give rise to any such doubts.

Man attains the highest through the performance of duty done as a sacrifice to the Lord and not through abandonment of action. The one who does not do his duty leads an empty life.

Jnaneshwar Maharaj has this to say: 'Like unseasonable clouds, all deeds of his life are futile. His life can produce nothing useful—like the hanging mass of flesh on the neck of a goat (which does not yield milk.)'

Verily work performed with detachment and as dedication to God will be an answer to Sankara's pleading that we may be saved from the cycle of birth and death. □ □ □

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Pains and Pleasures of Old Age

V. N. Hoon

III

So, I think there should be no reason to fear death. Those who have preceded us—let us think of them with affection and love. The poet has said: "Let the dead past bury its dead." The meaning of this is that one should not ruminate upon what has passed. But I do think that one should think about the wonderful experiences of one's past life and the past friends and dear ones. To think that way is to live twice. It is healthy to have sentiments without being sentimental. Old men are prone to become sentimental. That is a puerile and futile exercise in self-deception. It is well said: Make a friend of your own self and do not hate, despise or pity yourself nor on the other hand think highly of your qualities and your greatness whether past or present. While self-pity is the most abominable of emotions, humility is the most noble. High-mindedness goes well with humility. If we must speak the truth, we need not do so harshly or aggressively. Some old people take an unnatural kind of pleasure in giving harsh truths to all and sundry. Such die-hards are often shunned by friends and foes. If one has to speak the truth, it can be done pleasantly, tactfully, kindly without hurting or annoying the other person. Courtesies of life have often been trodden underfoot in the name of truth.

Many years ago I read the celebrated book of the great French writer, Romain Rolland, entitled *Jeane Christophe*. Romain Rolland, if you recollect, is the French savant who wrote the well-known books on Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He gives a beautiful description of old age in the shape of one of his most loved characters and I will quote to you how he describes the old man.

He says: "Surprisingly strong he was past 80. He had a full head of hair, and a thick beard

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with some black hairs. He had only about 10 teeth left, but with these he could chew lustily. It was a pleasure to see him at the table. He had a hearty appetite, and though he reproached his son for drinking, he always emptied his bottle himself. Wine, beer, cider—he could do justice to all the good things that the Lord hath made. He was not so foolish as to lose his reason in his cups.

"He was strong of foot and eye. He got up with the crack of dawn and performed his ablutions scrupulously, for he cared for his appearance and respected his person. He lived alone in his house, of which he was the sole occupant and never let his visiting daughter-in-law meddle with his affairs, although he loved her. He cleaned out his room, made his own coffee, sewed on his buttons, nailed and glued and altered; and going to and fro and up and down the stairs in his shirt-sleeves, he never stopped singing in a sounding bass which he loved to ring out as he accompanied himself with operatic gestures. And then he used to go out in all weathers. He went about his business, omitting none, but he was not often punctual. He was to be seen at every street-corner arguing with some acquaintance or joking with some woman whose face he had remembered, for he loved pretty women and old friends. And so he was always late, and never knew the time. But he never let the dinner hour slip by. He dined wherever he might be, and he would not go home until late after nightfall after a visit to his grandchildren.

Then he would go to bed, and before he went to sleep read a page of his old Bible and during the night—for he never slept for an hour or two together—he would get up to take down one of his old books, bought second hand, history, theology, belles-letters or science-fiction. He used to read at random a few pages which interested and bored him, and he could no longer quite rightly understand them, though he did not skip a word, until sleep came to him again.

"On Sunday he would go to Church, walk with the children and play bowls. He had never been ill except for a little gout in his toes, which used to make him swear at night while he was reading his Bible. It seemed as though he might live to be a hundred, and he himself could see no reason why he should not live longer. The only sign that he was growing old was that he was more easily brought to tears, and at times became somewhat irritable."

What a beautiful picture of old age is drawn in the above passage. How many of us could say that we who have not yet reached 80 are living like that.

Loneliness is another curse of the old people. Inevitably this loneliness of old age makes many turn to God, the Supernatural and the Divine. They try to find solace that way. They try to be-

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friend God as the Friend of friends who, it is said, can never leave one in the lurch. Whether you are young, middle-aged or old, it makes no difference to Him. It is said by the sages that once you have realised Him as being in your own Self, your whole concept of life and outlook will change. You could then never be sad, never morose, never anxious because you are in His company. He is with you, in you, holding your hand. And then, come poverty, come disease, come pain and distress, they say, you can go through it more easily, even dauntlessly. You can then face death itself with equanimity.

I often think about Lord Dunsany's story of Odysseus and Death. Odysseus, the great hero of the Greek wars, who had fought and won many a battle and slain many a foe, had grown very old. He sat alone, in his room, before the hearth, warming his knotted hands. Sleet and rain and high winds howled outside. And as he sat there, a lonely figure,—suddenly the door flew open, bringing in a fierce, shrieking, cold blast of wind that blew bitterly on the old warrior. And Death came up behind him and suddenly shouted. And Odysseus went on warming his hands. And Death came closer and lay a clammy hand on the shoulder of Odysseus. Without looking back Odysseus knew who had come for him, for he had been expecting the sable Visitor.

And after a while Odysseus said: "Well, my friend, thou hast come at last. Thou served me well in many a field. Come, lend me thy shoulder!"

And Odysseus stood up and leaned heavily upon the arm of Death and arm in arm they went out together through the open door.

That was a magnificent way of welcoming Death when it had to come and the time was up. Let us all be like Odysseus—fearless and brave unto the End.

Odysseus was a king. He had his estate, his house and the warmth of his home fire. But every one is not an Odysseus. Most people get frustrated due to the supposed or real ingratitude of those upon whom they had pinned their hopes. And since in our present day society, the majority of the old persons get adrift, it is essential to find some material solution. And what is that solution? Either children should become old-fashioned enough to care, or society become interested enough to provide community life of reasonable comfort to those it is now ignoring and throwing out of society.

Since due to the exigencies and stresses of modern life, it is becoming increasingly difficult for young members of the family to look after their old folk, the first solution is not possible. That is, children cannot become old-fashioned enough to look after their aged parents. The other alternative, therefore, is the only

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one that is feasible and necessary, namely that the society must help. In many countries, old age pensions, free medical treatment and even homes are provided by the state. In India there is none of those things. When even the young starve and many adolescents are homeless, the old people just do not come into the picture.

Take only a small instance—the instance of the pensioners. A man who retires on pension at 55 years, took service when the prices were 10 to 20 times less than they are now. His pension etc. fixed 35 years ago can hardly be imagined as adequate now. And yet the government has not moved much to help even in this small direction. Lately there has been a small but still wholly inadequate recompense. Even medical facilities that were previously available to the man in Government service are often denied. There is of course still a lot of sentiment towards the old but it remains an empty sentiment. The community must help turn this sentiment in favour of establishing decent homes for the helpless and lonely aged. These have to be built by state aid of material donation. But unfortunately there is no sense of priority for this matter from the government. Financial restraints no doubt are the main reason. Then what is the alternative?

It is for the old people themselves to get together and help themselves, for instance by building community homes on the basis of cooperation. These homes will be a community of elderly people, run for the elderly people and by the elderly people. In the community homes envisaged above, the vegetable purchaser, the kitchen runner, the accounts keeper, the plumber and the electrician for small repairs, the linen incharge, the scavenging supervisor will all be old people in the Home. The Home will be self-supporting both for recreational and essential servicing. If a cooperative institution is set up, the Government can be approached to allot the required area of land on a subsidised basis. The expenses on construction of each homelet in this colony will be borne by the participants and also the general expenses—these being paid by a monthly charge, which will not be much. This will by no means be either a charitable institution or an Old People's Home as generally understood. It will be a standard, highly respectable, colony of good, cultured people who would like to come together for the sake of creating common facilities that pose a serious problem for old people living by themselves. A self-sustaining, self-respectful, dignified, peaceful Elders' Home and haven it will be—not a home for the destitutes but a home for those who would not like to be a burden on their children or their relations, but who would like to live decently in a camaraderie of common interests.

(To be continued)

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Auroville
The City of Dawn

SRI Aurobindo's concept of the superman is a philosophy coupled with a practical programme of religious nature. The practical programme adds much to the concept and makes it more than a mere theory.

If we call this programme a movement the root of it has to be traced to the early years of the life of Sri Aurobindo (in England) when he vaguely developed a sense of world mission.

A long period of preparation intervenes between this early seed-state and the political phase of the movement. The political is really not different from the later spiritual phase of the movement.

When Sri Aurobindo entered into the political arena in 1906 he did so with a complete sense of dedication to the cause of the Divine, of which Mother India was the most concrete form to him at that time.

The spiritual phase from 1910 to 1950 may, again, be divided into two—pre and post-1926, i.e., before and after his becoming a recluse.

The principal events of the first period are his gift to the world of the philosophy of the divine life in the pages of the *Arya*, his meeting with his spiritual consort, the Mother, and the latter's joining him with an identical mission.

The second period is, on the one hand, an attempt to bring down the Supermind to the human body-mind-life, and, on the other, to build up the spiritual commune to be a stable support and means of assimilating the forces coming down.

Even the passing away of Sri Aurobindo in 1950 has been looked

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upon as a strategic move and a great sacrifice toward facilitating the process of the descent of the Supermind and divinization of human nature.

The movement has grown considerably after 1950 with the progress of the Descent and the transmuting effect of the Supermind. These claims cannot be objectively verified, and the movement is still not far enough beyond the formative stage for any kind of assessment.

However, the latest phase of the movement is the inauguration of Auroville (the City of Dawn) near Pondicherry as an international township designed to be the first city of the New Humanity.

This project has strong utopian elements. Utopias are not, however, necessarily fanciful. The seriousness with which the project is being pursued, the spiritual need of mankind at the moment, anticipation by some other thinkers of a new glorified future for humanity—all of these lend a measure of credibility to the movement and the unique concept of the Superman.

Sri Aurobindo's Concept of the Superman by Chitta Ranjan Goswami—published by Sri Aurobindo Books Distribution Agency, Pondicherry-605002, Pages 259. Price Rs. 35/-.

□□□

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Venguswamy is no more: Long Live Venguswamy!

S. N. IYER

"NORMALLY it is sweet sixteen but I wish you a sweeter seventy."

"That is a nice way of felicitating this old man," he said. And as he gave out a loud and hearty laugh, none, much less I, could have imagined that he would die so soon, within a bare 10 months, on May 25, 1976.

For at ripe 70, Shri S. Venguswamy, though at the peak of his life, was only at the prime of old age. Young in heart and mind and untiringly energetic, he did everything with the enthusiasm of an apprentice out to prove his worth. "I am not perfect," he used to say. "No man is. But one must aim at perfection." And it was towards perfection that he stretched out his arms in tireless striving.

His activities amazed men half

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his age. Among these: work at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan where he was Honororay Financial Adviser, visits to Powai in suburban Bombay where he helped build a temple in the I.I.T. Campus, regular lectures on "Government Accounts" to prospective chartered accountants, a *Gita* class here, an "Abhiramiyanthadi" discourse there and a group Bhajan somewhere else—all packed into a never-failing daily routine that began with an early-morning musical communion with the Lord and ended well past midnight until reading or writing finally tired him into sleep.

After an eventful government career which began in the Accountant-General's office, included a brief stint in Rangoon and climaxed as Deputy Financial Adviser to Hindustan Steel Ltd., Rourkela, where he was Deputy Governor of Lions International too, Shri Venguswamy busied himself mostly with matters spiritual and literary. A Tamil Scholar (the famed writer Kee Vaa Jagannathan had a special regard for him), he was closely associated with both the Bombay and Goregaon Tamil Sanghams. Sanskrit, and the *Bhagvad Gita* particularly, held a special fascination for him.

"I wish every Indian not only learnt the Gita but lived it," he used to say. To him the *Gita* was a way of life, dutiful, dedicated, disciplined and righteous. To propagate it, he founded the Gita Bhajan Mandali whose classes, he insisted, should consist of husband-and-wife couples though, much to his disappointment, it ended up as an all-women affair. A master of English, Shri Venguswamy's oratory was loaded with a lot of wisdom and some wit.

At Pragati Nagar in Bombay's distant suburb of Goregaon where he lived his last four years, the traditional Republic Day or Christmas message or any traditional message for that matter was traditionally given by him. Invariably in his speeches he harked back to those glorious old days when India was on top of the world. "That was before we started aping the West, when Indians were truly Indian and things used to be done the Indian way."

So, preservation and furtherance of that distinct and fascinating Indian culture—Bharatiya Vidya—became a passionate obsession with him. And it was more because of this than as a forum where he could put to use his financial expertise that he dearly valued his association with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Shri Venguswamy was deeply religious but never unduly ritualistic. Godly in thought and word, he was sternly down-to-earth in deed. While he introduced *Gita* recitation in the Republic Day celebration, he also organised community cleaning of the public drainage. If neither caught up as a lasting trend, it was not because he was lacking in inspiration or

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leadership but because, generally, those who make a show of following men like him are wanting in sincerity and dedication to the cause.

Devout Hindu that he was, Shri Venguswamy valued secularism as a social creed. The same imposing figure in *dhoti* and *angavastram* that caught everyone's attention at the Hindu religious function, one could see, on a different occasion, in trousers and closed coat, presiding over the Christmas celebration. And if the Muslims in the area where he lived had arranged a secular Ramzan festival, there he would have been, in *sherwani*, at the head of it all! "Secularism is not negation or destruction of religion but promotion of all religions so that all of them can thrive and live together," he uses to stress.

He is no more. Many will revere the memory of the man with the fearless mind who held his head high above men of ordinary ilk, who never stinted money or service for a good cause. It was typical of "this poor man" to donate Rs. 1001 when Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan released M. S. Subbulakshmi's L.P. record of devotional songs. Typically, again, he served humanity even in death as in life—like a true Lion, he donated his eyes. And he had offered his kidney, too, though the offer could not be taken advantage of.

"Now who will celebrate Guru Poornima and Gita Jnana Yagna?" someone remarked.

"Why, you should all do it."

"Oh, when the Guru himself is gone, who will remember the Poornima?"

That's an unfortunate thing. For, great men start a movement not because they could be at the head of it for ever but because it should catch on. But that also signifies a living truth—that this ancient Hindu culture which has overcome all odds and held good for 5000 years will go on for ever, gaining new vigour as saints and sages keep appearing, regularly though rarely, on the Indian scene. And, more numerously though serving smaller circles, men like Shri Venguswamy. □ □ □

Yoga is not for him who eats too much, or for him who eats too little. It is not for him, O Arjuna, who sleeps too much, or for him who keeps vigil too long.

For the man who is temperate in his food and recreation, who is restrained in all his actions, and who has regulated his sleep and vigils, Yoga puts an end to all sorrows.

—Bhagavad Gita

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Notes and News

SAINT'S VIGRAHA INSTALLED

A "VIGRAHA" of Saint Arunagirinathar was installed on April 7 at the Swaminatha Swami Temple in New Delhi in the presence of a distinguished gathering including Shri T. Sadasivam and Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi. The religious ceremonies which began in the early hours of the morning were attended by hundreds of "Muruga Bhaktas" in the capital. There was a "Prakara Utsavam" of the "Vigraha" in the evening.

The Arunagirinathar Sixth Birth Centenary Celebration Committee arranged at the Swami Malai Temple in the evening a function to honour Shri A. S. Raghavan, "the brain behind the centenary celebrations throughout the country." Justice S. Rangarajan of the Delhi High Court presented a "Ponnadai" to Shri Raghavan for his services to the cause of "Thiruppugazh". Shri R. Venkataraman, Chairman of the Centenary Celebrations Committee, presided over the function, and a galaxy of speakers praised Shri Raghavan for spreading "Thiruppugazh" in Delhi.

Shri Raghavan, affectionately known as "Guruji" to his disciples in Delhi and outside, has been propagating the cause of "Thiruppugazh" for over two decades. By dint of his devoted service, "Thiruppugazh" is now sung with devotion by innumerable devotees throughout the country and even abroad. The very idea of celebrating Saint Arunagirinathar Sixth Birth Centenary was mooted by him and he has been the moving spirit behind the entire celebrations.

At the function, Shri Raghavan presented a cheque for Rs. 55,000 as donation for the building of Kalyana Mandapam and Meenakshi Sundareser Sannidhi in the Swamimalai Temple, New Delhi, on behalf of "Thiruppugazh Anbargals." This was only one of several such donations made by the Bhajana Group under Shri Raghavan for the temple in the past. That such substantial funds could be collected by a mere Bhajana body speaks volumes for the efforts of this Bhajana group which includes several women and children.

SANSKRIT DRAMA IN CANADA

"SANGHAMITRA," a dance-drama in Sanskrit by Prof. V. Subramaniam portraying the conversion of Emperor Asoka by his daughter Sanghamitra to Buddhism, was recently performed for the first time in Canada.

Shanta and her husband Dhananjayan of Bharata Kalanjali, Adyar, were invited to New York jointly by the Education Department of the State and Indian Cultural Council at the instance of Prof. Subramaniam of the Carleton University to give a series of performances.

The press reviews commended Dhananjayan's interpretation of the earlier Asoka as a boastful conqueror and of Shanta as the firm and loving daughter. The Toronto audience which included several musically talented Indians was keenly appreciative of the dance-drama.

Prof. Subramaniam's first book of dance-drama, **Pancha Kanya Tarangini** released last September, dealt with five women who played a part

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in Buddha's life. His second book of five dance-dramas to be released, deals with five women who influenced five great men in Buddhist history. "Sanghamitra" is the first of these five.

In this drama, Asoka, after his victory over the Kalinga army, shows the ornaments from the Kalinga treasury to his daughter who is outraged by his callousness. Asoka is at first shocked by his daughter's abuse but soon sees her point and embraces Buddhism. Then he becomes listless as his boundless energies are unused. The Head Priest suggests sending missions to convert all Asia. Asoka thus becomes a missionary conqueror. The Bhikkus then want to confer the title of 'Mahadayaka' on him to which his daughter objects. She insists that he should give his dearest, namely herself, to the "Sangha."

SRI SANKARA JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS

SANKARA JAYANTI was celebrated in a grand manner by the devotees of Sri Sankara at the Rig Veda Pathasala of Kambarasampettai Village in Tiruchirappalli District of Tamil Nadu from April 30 to May 4, 1976 for five days as "Garbhotsavam."

Every day "Abhishekam" and "Aradhana" were conducted in the morning, and in the evening, scholars delivered discourses on the greatness of Adi Sankara, his philosophy and his works.

On the Jayanti day, a flower-decorated picture of Sri Sankara was taken in procession along the main street of the village, with school children singing the 'Stotras" of Sri Sankara. The function came to an end with the distribution of prasadam sent by His Holiness the Sankaracharya of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham.

In addition, on May 5, the 83rd birthday of His Holiness Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, was also celebrated by the devotees. Shri G. Kandaswamy Dixit, the founder of Shri Bala Gurukulam Sanskrit Mission, gave a discourse on the greatness and teachings of the Acharya and also emphasised the need for learning Sanskrit. He also urged the parents to interest their children in learning Sanskrit through the various schemes of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

MADRAS KENDRA:

Rig Veda Commentary Released

"SIDDHANJANA," a commentary in Sanskrit on the Rig Veda by Shri T. V. Kapali Sastry with English translation by Shri M. P. Pandit and Shri S. Sankaranarayanan was released at a function arranged by the Madras Kendra of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan at Sri Venkata Auditorium in Mylapore on Sunday, May 16.

In the absence of Shri K. K. Shah, Governor of Tamil Nadu, Shri T. V. Viswanatha Iyer, Vice-Chairman of the Bhavan, released the book and presented the first copy to Shri Mahalingam, younger brother of Shri Sastri. A distinguished gathering was present on the occasion.

In his speech, which was read out, Shri Shah said the Vedic age was the period when India was at the acme of civilisation. The Vedic Indian was not the primitive man as made out to be by some later scholars.

Because of the revealed nature of the Vedas and their spiritual content, the Vedas had stood the ravages of time and were considered sacred and the fountain spring of all our culture.

Paying tributes to Shri Sastry, he described him as a Yogi. He hoped the English translation would open out the secrets of the esoteric interpretation to the non-Sanskritic world as well.

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With the release of the book, he hoped, more and more of the scholars in the West would see that the Vedas did not belong merely to the Indians, but to the whole world.

Shri M. Anantanarayanan, former Chief Justice of Tamil Nadu who unveiled a portrait of Shri Sastry, described him as one of the great Vedic scholars.

Welcoming the gathering, Shri Viswanatha Iyer said for thousands of years the people of India had regarded the Vedas as revelation of the Almighty. The commentary was in line with the spirit of the interpretation given to Vedas by Sri Aurobindo.

Shri M. P. Pandit referred to his association with Shri Sastry and explained the circumstances under which he undertook to write this book in his 60th year. Shri S. Sankaranarayanan said Shri Sastri was a person primarily spiritual and his spiritual personality would exist as long as the Vedas existed.

The function began with chanting of Vedic Riks by Pandits. Smt. Vijaya Sankaranarayanan rendered the invocation.

DELHI KENDRA:

Diploma Awarding Function

THE Sardar Patel College of Communication and Management celebrated its annual function of awarding diplomas and medals on March 23, 1976 in the Bhavan's premises.

Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, Chairman, Delhi Kendra, was the Chief Guest.

A large number of students had assembled to receive their medals and diplomas and the members of the staff were also present.

Dr. Navathe, Principal of the College, welcomed the Chief Guest, students and staff and read his report for the year 1974-75. He highlighted the excellent performances on the part of students who had secured all-India prizes in the diploma examination. Smt. and Shri Lalita Unni of the Journalism group carried away four medals and Rs. 900/- worth of cash prizes at this function. The performance of the students of Journalism and Book Publishing was also praiseworthy with all the students passing.

Shri Hathiji, in his convocation address, explained the values which the Bhavan cherished and the guiding principles which the students should imbibe from their studies in the Bhavan's College. He congratulated the medal-winners and also the diploma-holders and wished them all success.

Smt. Unni, winner of all-India gold medal, thanked the Chief Guest, staff and members of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

HYDERABAD KENDRA:

College Function

INDUSTRIAL Relations and Industrial Management are the two new courses to be introduced at Bhavan's College of Mass Communication, Hyderabad, from next July, according to Shri V. H. Desai, Principal of the College.

Presiding over the Valedictory function organised by the Students Council (1975-76) here on May 9, Shri Desai said that the Industrial Relations course was being recognised by the Government of India (Ministry of Labour) shortly.

The college was already offering four one-year Diploma Courses in Journalism, (Language Journalism in Telugu and Urdu is also provided), Marketing, Advertising & Public Relations and Business Management.

The courses offered by Bhavan's College of Mass Communications were duly recognised by Public Sector and Private Sector undertakings of the country, he said.

Shri Desai sought the cooperation of public and the past students of this College in furthering the activi-

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ties of the College, as well as the Hyderabad Kendra of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Concluding, he said, "Bhavan's College does not aim at merely producing Diploma-holders, it expects its students to imbibe the spirit of Bhavan in whatever profession they choose."

Some of the faculty members and students spoke on the occasion. Earlier Shri S. Sethu Madhavan of the Students' Council welcomed the gathering.

Shri P. S. Prasad, Secretary of the Students' Council, proposed a vote of thanks.

LONDON KENDRA
RAMA NAVAMI

THE Kendra celebrated "Rama Navami" on March 10 with special pooja by the Registrar Shri Mathoor Krishnamurti and special music concert. Songs were rendered by Dr. Vasantshree to the accompaniment of Smt. Rudrani Balakrishnan violin and Shri S. K. Kurup, mridangam.

Dr. B. B. Konnur was the Chief Guest of the day who explained the significance of the "Rama Navami."

Navami or ninth day of Chaitra Shuddha is Rama Navami—Sri Rama's birthday. Worship of Rama music, car festivals take place from the Prathama—the first day to the ninth day. It is a great day and it is one of the national festivals. One of the western scholars has remarked: "take away Ramayana and Mahabharata from India—its culure will be cypher!"

All over India—practically in every house of the Hindu—one will find Sri Rama's and Sita's picture and a copy of the Ramayana. One in a hundred at least will have the name of Rama and Sita. Why is this? It shows the depth of the influence of Sri Rama.

In literature, in sculptures, in paintings we find scenes of Ramayana depicted. Hardly will there be a village where we do not find Sri Rama temple.

Rama was ideal in everything; an ideal son, ideal student, ideal king, ideal husband, ideal brother, ideal friend and above all ideal man.

To remember such an ideal man—the God—Rama's birthday is celebrated all over India. Rama was an embodiment of righteousness "Ramao Vigrahavaan Dharmah." Sita was equally—if not more—great. Rama was in the words of Gandhi "Nirbalke bal Ram"—strength of the weak.

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BOOK REVIEW

ENGLISH

HINDUISM AND THE MODERN AGE by N. K. Devaraja. Published by Islam and Modern Age Society, New Delhi. Pages x plus 154. Price Rs. 35/-.

IT is a happy augury that this book on Hinduism by an eminent scholar has been sponsored and published by a Muslim Society. The Society is bringing out simple and authoritative books on the four principal religions —Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism, in order to promote better understanding of religion and to arrest the decline in the influence of religion on the life of the modern man. This is a step in the right direction, but much more will have to be done.

By their propaganda, religions have brought one another into contempt. Therefore what the world needs today is not just tolerance or even fellowship among religions, but their active cooperation for the achievement of common, wisely chosen objectives. And there can be no better objective for all religions than to teach men self-restraint, right conduct, friendliness, compassion and such other homely virtues as are cherished all over the world. Cooperation has been the secret of the amazing success of science. The combined efforts of religions can still change the face of the earth by producing better men and a better society.

The book is informative, interesting and thought-provoking. It has discussed the several strengths and weaknesses of Hinduism and made a strong plea for the removal of caste and untouchability.

The author has well succeeded in his aim of giving an objective and yet sympathetic account of the developments in Hinduism during the last 100 years. But having traced the history of Hinduism thus far, the question arises: Where do we go from here? What is to be the shape of Hinduism in future? For example, the author has written approvingly of humanism and has quoted Vivekananda, Rabindranath and Mahatma Gandhi in support of humanism. But what is the big obstacle in the way of humanism and why can it not be removed? Surely there was no greater apostle of humanism than Sri Krishna. He taught it repeatedly and at the end of the Bhagavata, in reply to a specific query from Uddhava, declared: "To regard Me as the One present in all beings, to look upon all beings as Myself in thought, word and deed, is, I think, the best of all methods of worship."

In spite of all this, humanism has made no headway in India because of our unshakable but mistaken belief that only prayer, Pooja, Japa and Dhyana are the way to God and that, by implication, service of man through proper performance of duties is useless, if not harmful, for

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spiritual progress. In an important verse of the Bhagavata, which religious people generally ignore, Sri Krishna declared: "When a man or woman worships Me with great devotion and does his duties without any selfish motive, he or she should be known as possessed of Sattvika nature. When they worship Me for the attainment of their desires, for the sake of wealth and blessings, they should be known as possessed of Rajasika nature; and if they worship Me in order to do injury to others, they are of Tamasika nature."

Sri Krishna has made a similar classification of Tapasya in the Gita and his intention is clear. A man's spirituality is judged not by the nature or amount of his Sadhana but by the quality of his dealings with fellow beings. The crucial factor in spirituality is selflessness, altruism or regard for others rather than prayer, worship or meditation. Ravana and several other demons were devotees of God whose nature was not changed by their austerities and who in fact became more powerful demons because of the boons they got as a reward for their austerities.

Often there are conflicting or divergent injunctions in the scriptures on one and the same topic. Surely they cannot all be correct; and so we have to select one and reject or downgrade all the rest. Our religious leaders, saints and savants would render a signal service to the cause of religion if they sift its teachings and highlight those which are rational, in accordance with facts and knowledge, useful to all, universal and which, if practised on a large scale, would lead to the greatest good of the greatest number. Such modernized, well reasoned and condensed versions giving the best of Hinduism, the best of Islam etc. are the greatest need of the world today.

—R. B. Lal

THE LIVING MAHABHARATHA

by Dr. J. R. Goyal. Published by Indian Heritage, 1193, Shora Kothi, Subzi Mandi, Delhi, First Edition 1975. Pages 176, Price Rs. 25/-.

THE Mahabharata is our golden treasury of ethics. It is of perennial appeal and through the long centuries it has remained a source of inspiration and solace to millions of people. The Gita comprising 18 chapters of this epic contains the cream of Vedic philosophy. The original in Sanskrit is a stupendous work running to over a lakh and a quarter stanzas in 18 parvas (cantos). It has had several translations. Kunjikuttan Tampuran has translated it in Malayalam verse in the same metres as in the original. More recently Vidwan Prakasam has brought out a translation in Malayalam prose. The Kannada translation in verse was completed by two poets, Kumar Vyas and Thimmanna. The Telugu translation also in verse, was effected by three poets in succession, Nannayya, Tikkanna and Yeranna. The original as well as these translations are accessible only to a few, and those who can afford to read and reread them are fewer still. A faithful summary of the great epic therefore has always been a desideratum.

As early as 1951 the Bhavan has published such a condensation from the facile pen of Rajaji and it has run into several editions. Rajaji has told the story in 106 chapters in 328 pages. Dr. Goyal has now presented us with his condensation eminently written. Unlike Rajaji Dr. Goyal has followed the sequence of parvas in the original. As stated in his preface his aim was to bring out the epic "in a form acceptable to the modern man" and the readers will find this fulfilled. Dr. Goyal has laid special emphasis on the moral teachings of the epic. For instance he has written in some detail about the Gita, Viduraniti and Bhishma-

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upadesa (the three important sermons), while Rajaji has made only passing references to these topics. It is also possible that Dr. Goyal is better qualified in this behalf. To prepare a summary of the gigantic work is far from simple and yet nothing important appears to have been left out. Dr. Goyal has, a little earlier, brought out a summary of the Ramayana and it was widely acclaimed by educationists and the Press. I strongly recommend the pesent book to all English-knowing men and women in India and abroad who desire to have a glimpse of the glory that is India installed on the foundations of Dharma.

The printing and get-up of the book are good enough and the price is not high at the present day. Here and there proper nouns are misspelt on the basis of their Hindi pronunciation. It is heartening to note that the proceeds from the book will go to finance the Servants of Hindu Society and this is another reason why the book should be welcomed.

—V. K. Moothathu

FOR POWER OR FOR PEOPLE

by K. S. Malle Gowda, M.P., Geetha Book House, 1976, pages 336, price not mentioned.

THE author of this book, who is a Member of Parliament, has a sound knowledge of the rural conditions in India. He complains that the villages have not received the attention of the planners to the extent their importance demands. He is not alone in saying so. Many economists, Indian and foreign, have declared categorically that the economic planning has not taken the counry far because it has not done much to develop the countryside. India has always lived in her villages and industrialisation since independence has not altered this fact.

No less a body than the Planning Commission has spoken of the vastness of the problem of rural regeneration. Agriculture is still the corner-stone of the country's economic progress and yet it has received insufficient attention. "On the side of administration proper," writes the eminent British economist, Barbara Ward, "from the highest level downwards agriculture gets priority in rhetoric but rarely in fact." This is also the complaint of the author of the book under review.

He points out that self-sufficiency in food has remained elusive. Since independence foodgrain imports have considerably drained the country's scarce resources, their estimated value from 1946 to 1973 being Rs. 5,237 crores. Even so, the people do not have enough to eat. Poverty, insufficient food production and an unchecked increase in the population have condemned the Indian masses to a state of semi-starvation. Water is more important than food and yet more than 60 per cent of the people do not have it for safe drinking. Housing is yet another criterion for assessing the economic condition of a people. According to Malle Gowda, rural India needs about seven crore houses to give its inhabitants reasonably habitable homes. The cost, which runs into tens of thousands of crores of rupees, is too prohibitive to cause one despair about the feasibility of the project.

The problems of rural India are thus stupendous and yet the author is optimistic about their solution. He is not opposed to land reforms and wants the land to be restored to the tiller of the soil. But he challenges the wisdom of imposing a ceiling on land-holdings and fears that such a measure will aggravate the problem of fragmentation of land-holdings, cause a fall in farm production, stimulate rural discontent and make any savings and investment in

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the rural economy impossible. He advocates a "floor" and not a ceiling on land-holdings in the same manner as minimum wages are fixed for the industrial labour.

The author wants that the "great dream" of the Indian people "should be to bring the peasantry's inland world into the mainstream of modern civilization."

—V. B. Kulkarni

SANSKRIT DRAMATURGY by Biswanath Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D., Sahitya Shastri; published by Bharat Manisha D; 28/171, Pande Haveli, Varanasi; pp. x+434; 1st edition, 1974; price: Rs. 50; U.S. $ 8.00; U.K. £ 3.50.

EVEN though there is no dearth of books on Sanskrit Drama and Dramaturgy, the book under notice has some special features justifying its appearance. As said in the Foreword, it is not "a history of the drama, nor is it a manual for the multitude who aspire to write plays and sell them." But, then, what is it? We find an answer to this again in the Foreword which says that it is a "tool for the use of those who wish to deepen their understanding and enhance the enjoyment of plays witnessed in the theatre or read in the study." Even a cursory reading of the book establishes beyond doubt the claim that is made out.

Growth and development of Sanskrit drama in India as also its study as a form of literature is a fascinating subject. Though the subject is dealt with by such eminent scholars as Dr. K. C. Pandeya, A. V. W. Jackson, K. R. Pisharoti, Dasgupta and Dr. Allardya Nicoll and many others, it is, by no means, exhaustive. The book examines the various viewpoints and theories formulated by the ancient writers on the nature, form and style of the drama.

Almost all the types of the drama beginning right from Ashvaghosha down to Murari have been thoroughly analysed and the generalizations drawn therefrom have been lucidly presented. But what distinguishes the book under notice from others of its kind and category is its novel feature symbolizing the comparative view and valuation of the Greek and Sanskrit practice as regards technique. This is nowhere found in any other kindred book as much as it is found here. Moreover, the author, an erudite scholar by tradition and training, has not only not lost sight of but has fully adumbrated all the requisites and requirements which a professional playwright must have in his armoury if he wants victory. Thus the book has both a theoretical and a practical value and utility. The author humbly submits, though not directly, that his book is not the final word. However, what he has said and done is sufficiently stimulating and adequately inspiring. Usually when the analysis is embarked upon, the interest flags and boredom develops. This does not happen anywhere in the book. This proves that the author is rich both in substance and style. Enough credit should be given without grudge or grumble to the author for his racy style.

The goal with which the author sets out—the goal of presenting all the extant views regarding the drama and of describing how they were formed and when they were formed and why they were formed at all, is more than fulfilled. Till now only a poetic appreciation of the Sanskrit drama was assayed. But here in the book we find that more, perhaps, most, emphasis is laid on the elabo-

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ration of its technical constitution.

It is hoped that the book will open up new vistas for a fresh and deeper study. We wish the distinguished author god-speed.

Two Appendices, General Index, and English equivalents facilitate the understanding of the book and enhance its practical utility. Prof. Suryakanta's learned Foreword epitomizes the salient features of the book.

The price is inexcusably high. This is a disturbing factor. It will indeed come in the way of wide publicity of the book which such books must have. Otherwise the book is all gold.

—Dr. A. S. Gopani

TELUGU

SRI RAMAYANA VIMARSAMRITAM by Dr. Ponnada Subrahmanyam, 4th Line, Brodipet, Guntur-2, A.P. Pp. 190—Price Rs. 3.00.

THE book under review consists of short sketches of the principal characters in Ramayana as delineated by sage Valmiki. The major portion of the book, as can be expected, has been assigned to Sri Rama. The author has included in his text, the original slokas from the Ramayana, appropriate to his dissertation. This enhances the value of the book.

Unlike Sri Krishna, Sri Rama, throughout his career, considered himself to be a human being instead of a Divine incarnation. "Atmanam manusham manye." His conduct therefore has been that of an ideal person. He was an ideal son, brother, husband and a king. The secret of his avatara was known only to a few sages such as Viswamitra, Vasishtha and Agastya. The author in elaborating the character of Rama, cites a number of illustrations to bring out the sterling qualities of Dharma, Satya, compassion, valour, forgiveness etc., which Rama cherished and practised.

One of the minor characters in Ramayana is Guha, who had an abounding love for Rama. When Rama gets into his boat to be ferried across the river, Guha remonstrates:

"O Lord! Let me wash your feet carefully.
This boat of mine is made of wood
I've heard the dust of your feet transforms stones into damsels.
And stone and wood belong to the same category of inanimate things.
Let me not lose my boat, O Lord! the mainstay of my life!"

"Kshalayami tava pada pamkajam
Natha daru drisha doh kimatram
Manusheekarana roopa masti ta
Padayoh rajamiti srutam maya."

The scripture and tradition handed down to us from generations past, constitute the Deposit of Faith. And this is being fast eroded. Values are crumbling and fast disappearing. To tilt the balance, we have to go to the roots of our culture as epitomised by the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. This book can serve as an appetiser for seeking the inimitable and immortal work of the first bard, Sage Valmiki.

—"VISAKHA"

The man who has not turned away from his evil ways, who is not tranquil, who has no concentration of mind and whose mind is not at rest—he can never reach this Self through mere knowledge.

—Katha Upanishad

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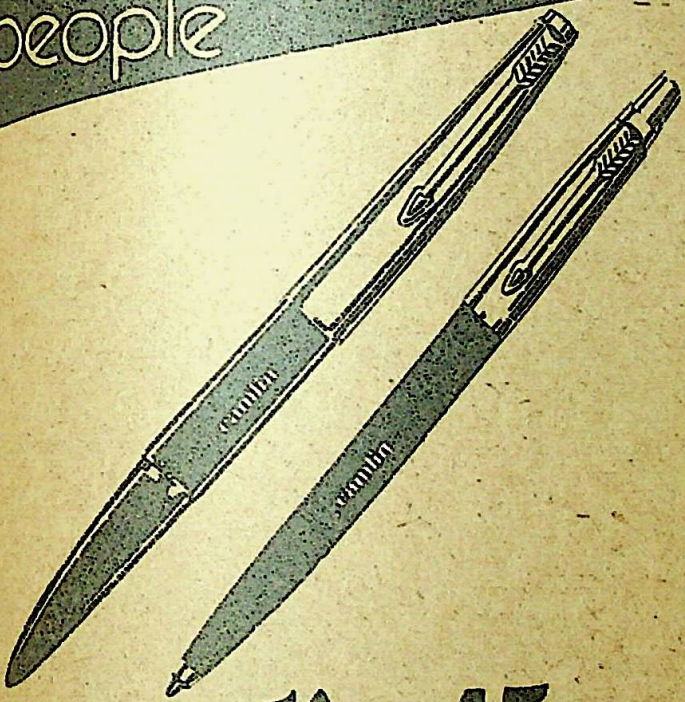

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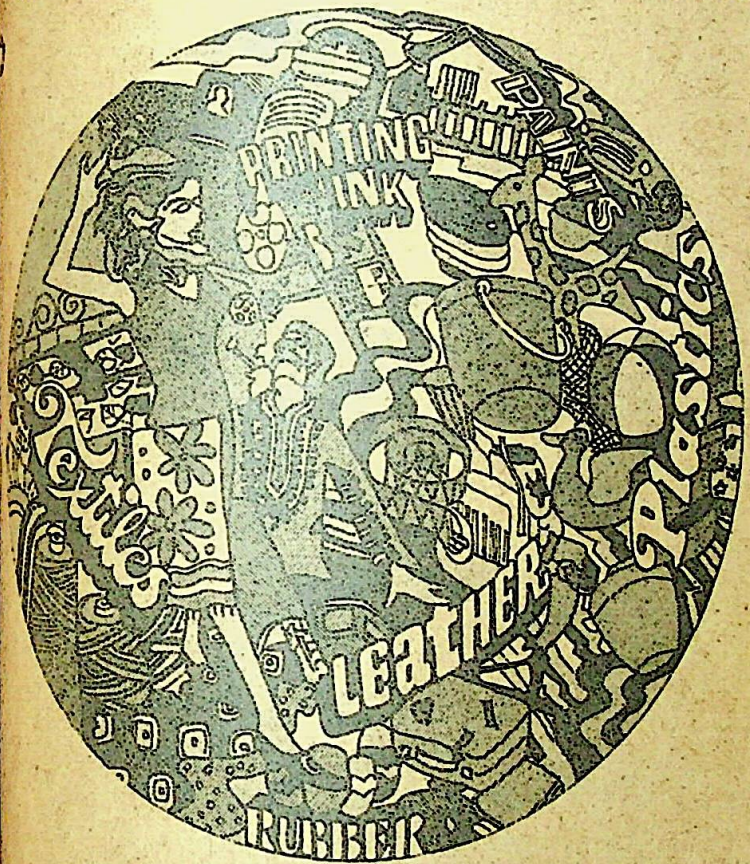

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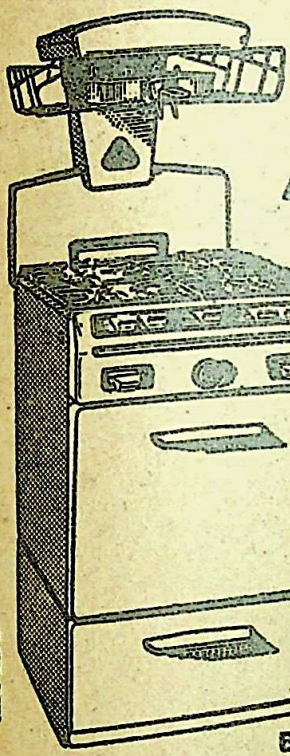

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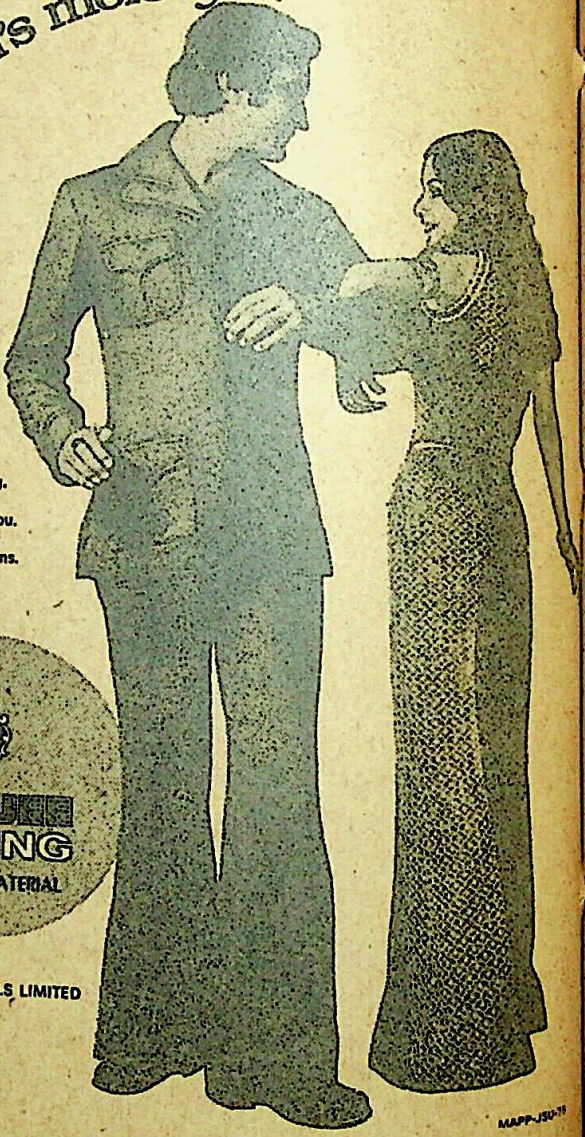

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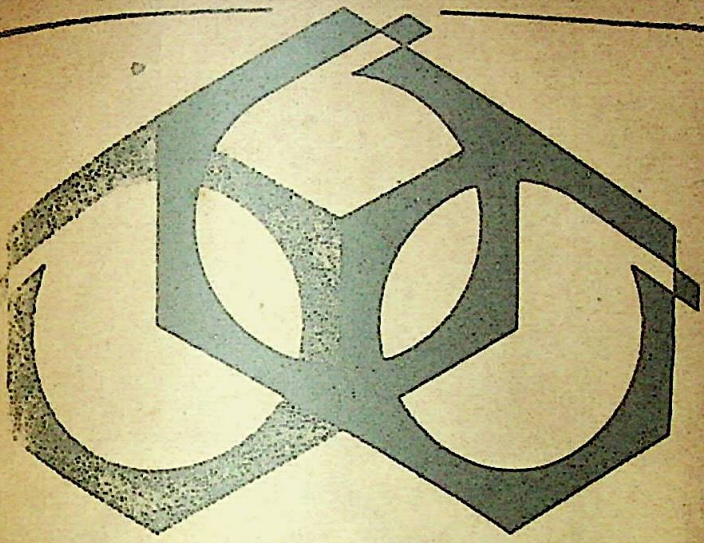

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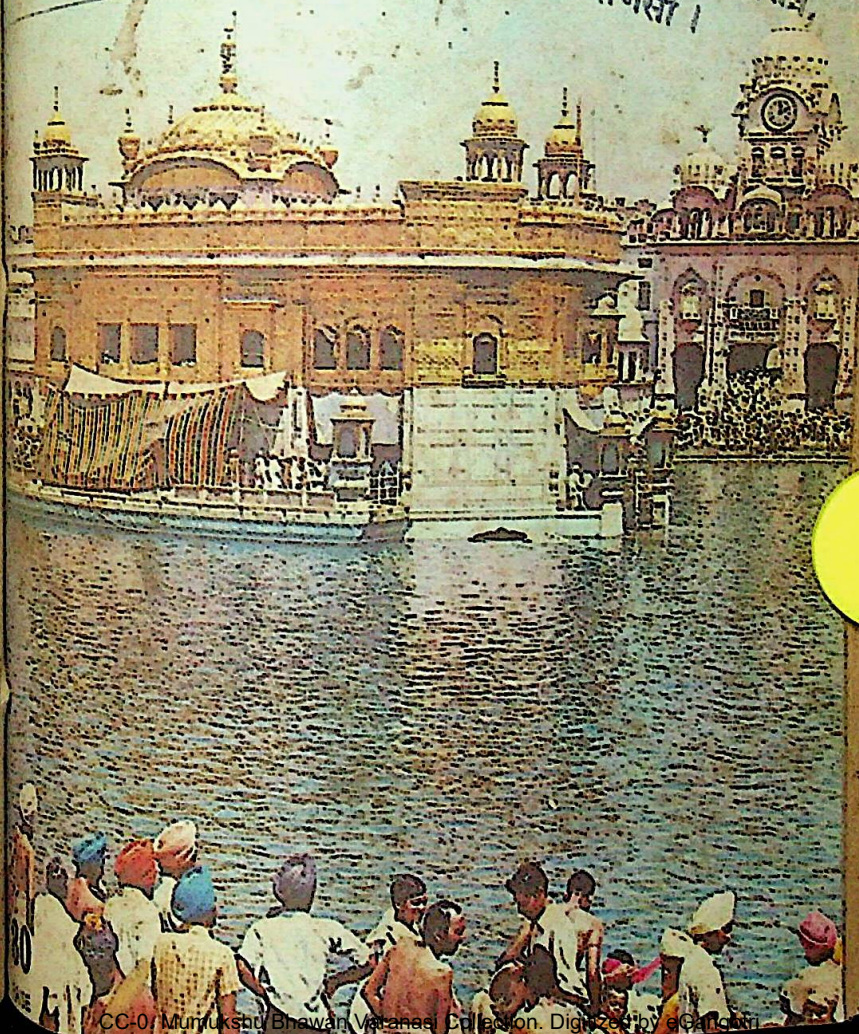

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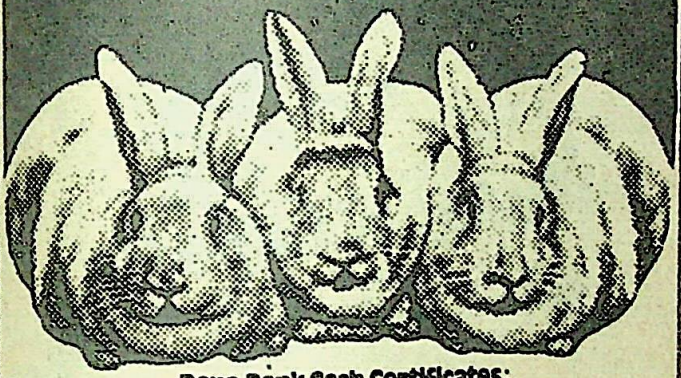

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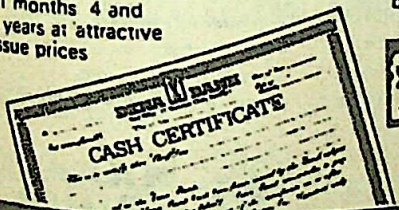

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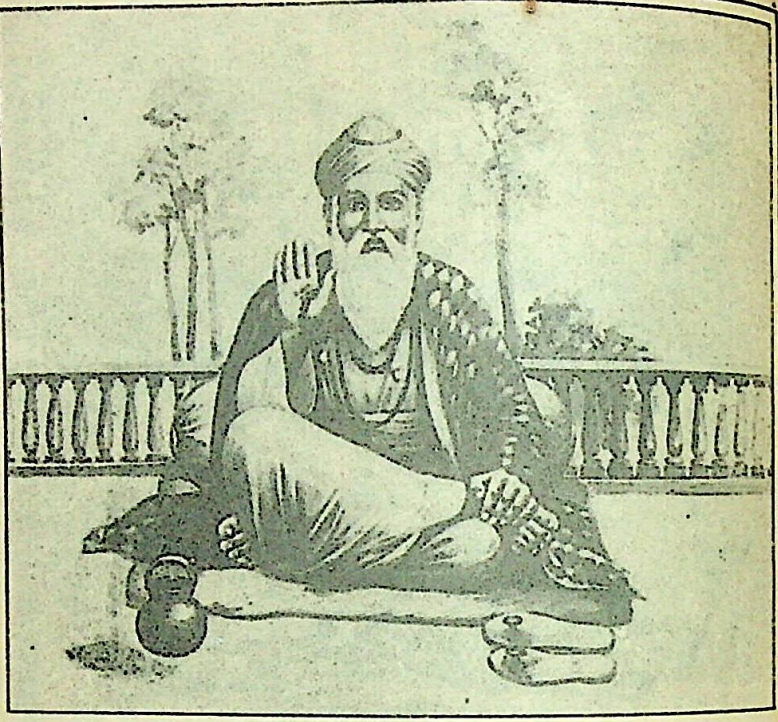

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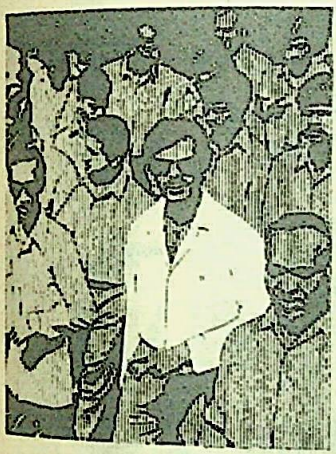

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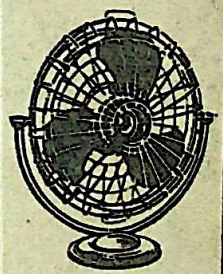

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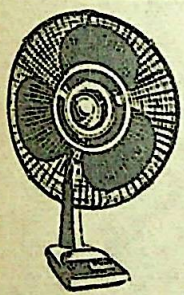

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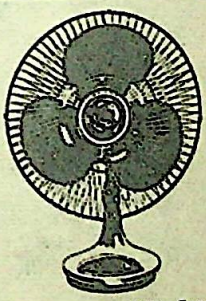

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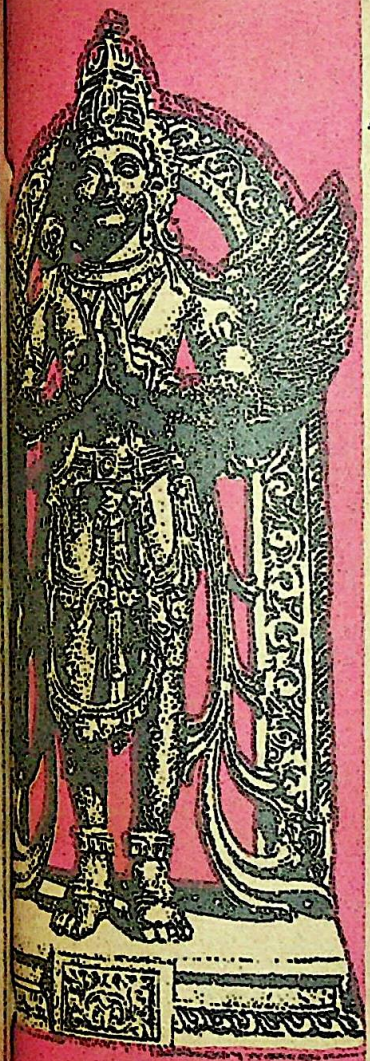

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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।
Let noble thoughts come to us from every side
Rigveda I-89-i

BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

PRAYER

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते
तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते
मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ।।

In whatever way men approach Me, even so do I reward them; My path, O son of Pritha, men tread, in all things.

Bhagawad Gita, IV. 11.

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Kulapati Vani

Source of Beauty

PERCEPTION of beauty depends not upon the natural beauty which surrounds us but upon the presence and the power of the fundamental aspiration.

We may nourish the aspiration by a study of beautiful things. We might train it to remain with us for some time, once it has been evoked. We may strengthen it by keeping in constant sympathy with the beauties of nature. But its source and strength are both derived from the spirit within. .

In this age of speed, we neglect the spirit. Daily newspapers, four-hourly doses of radio and the half-hourly 'hellos' of the telephone, drive us to seek exciting and sensational pleasures. We seek amusement instead of beauty. We are afraid of being alone. The fundamental aspiration is naturally stifled. Himalayas or no Himalayas, we do not feel the spirit of beauty. Naturally, we find no God.

If, therefore, we want beauty in life, not only in our own, but in that of the world as a whole, we must at all costs learn some time or the other to be alone with Nature and with ourselves when we can give time for our aspirations to rise and to raise us from our sordid day-to-day existence.

When I am alone, quiet and patient, I enter into an all-embracing calm. Then I live in the beauty that lies in the stream that makes the music, or the birds that twitter in ancient trees, or in the vast spaces on every side or in the stream which spreads out at my feet.

The tree, the cloud, the flower, the stream which give us this mysterious satisfaction are but magic symbols of the beauty that lies within. It is there, real, insistent, undeniable. It is a symbol of Reality.

If once the spirit of beauty is captured, the gates of Life Divine are opened and not even death can close them. □ □ □

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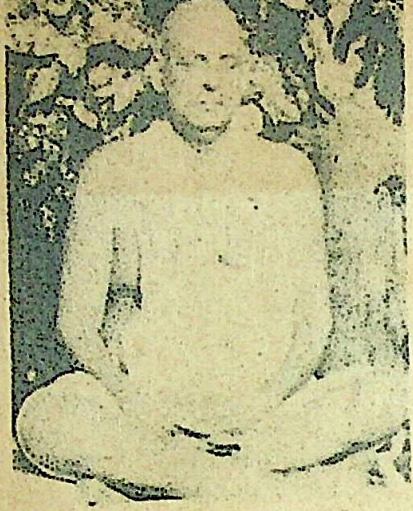

Philosophy of Hindu Symbols

SWAMI SIVANANDA

BELLS are rung in temples and while doing Pooja to shut out the external sounds and to make the mind inward and concentrated.

Lights are waved before the Deity. This denotes that the Lord is Jyoti Swarupa. He is all-light. The devotee says, "O Lord! Thou art the self-effulgent Light of the universe. Thou art the light in the sun, moon and fire. Remove the darkness in me by bestowing your divine light. May my intellect be illumined." This is the significance of waving lights.

Dhoop or scented sticks are burnt before the Deity. The smoke spreads in the whole room. It acts as a disinfectant. Burning of Dhoop denotes that the Lord is all pervading, that He fills the whole universe by His living presence. It is to remind this fact that Dhoop is burnt. The devotee prays, "O Lord! Let the Vasanas and Samskaras dormant in me vanish like the smoke of this Dhoop and become ashes. Let me become stainless."

Burning of camphor denotes that the individual ego melts like the camphor and the Jivatman becomes one with the supreme Light of lights.

The pasting of sandal reminds the devotee that he should, in his difficulties, be as patient as the sandal. Sandal emanates sweet odour when it is pasted. So also the devotee should not murmur when difficulties arise, but on the other hand, remain cheerful and happy and emanate sweetness and gentleness like the sandal. He should not hate even his enemy. This is another precept we learn from this. Though the sandal-wood is crushed and pasted, it silently wears out emanating only very sweet odour. One should not wish evil even to his enemy.

□ □ □

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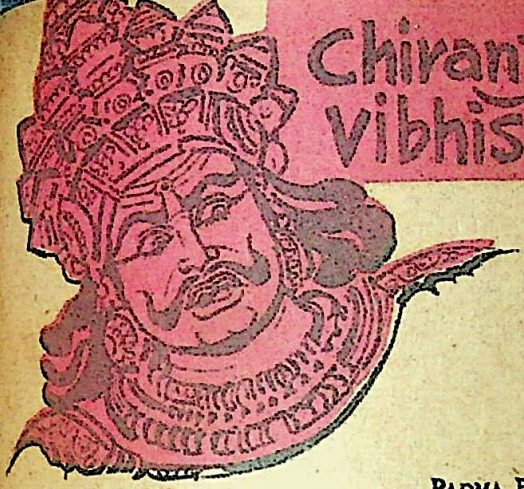

Chiranjeevi vibhishana

AN IMAGINARY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PADMA BHUSHAN K. SREENIVASAN

CHAPTER THREE

3

IT was when he was in this state of uncertainty that news was brought to us one day that a huge monkey—a *Vanara*—was destroying the Nectar grove and had killed the guards who had tried to prevent him. We were also told that he had been in conversation with Sita before he started on his acts of destruction.

Ravana was incensed at this. "Kill the monkey!" he ordered, and sent some well-armed soldiers to undertake the task. But they were either killed or ran away in terror. One of the generals, a brave soldier of many campaigns who volunteered to go and slay the monkey, was also killed. It was then that one of Ravana's sons, Akshaya, boasted that he would surely capture the monkey and bring him in chains. But Akshaya, courageous as he was, was obviously no match for the monkey and he too suffered the same fate as his predecessors.

Grief was now added to the anger that Ravana felt. Mortified by the loss of one of his beloved sons and wild at this blatant defiance to his authority inside his own city, he exclaimed that he would go and fight and kill the monkey himself. But his son Indrajit calmed him and went to capture the Vanara. He succeeded in doing so and the Vanara was brought on a huge cart to the presence of the king.

"Tell me, monkey," Ravana shouted. "Who sent you to the land of the Rakshasas?"

The monkey laughed in the king's face. Defeat at the hands of Indrajit did not seem to have cowed him or made him anxious.

"So, you are Ravana?" the

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Vanara laughed. "The last time I saw you, you were tied to Vali's tail, wriggling like a worm."

Ravana winced at this reminder of one of his defeats. "Tell me" he asked, "how is my friend Vali? Are you his emissary?"

"Vali is dead, killed by a single arrow of my lord, Sri Rama," Hanuman announced. "I am a follower of King Sugriva, brother of Vali."

"But why did Rama kill Vali?" Ravana asked, his curiosity thoroughly roused.

"Sri Rama and Lakshmana came to our mountain kingdom in search of Sita," Hanuman related the story. "Our king Sugriva had some of Sita's ornaments which she had thrown as you were carrying her away from Dandakaranya. Our king and Sri Rama became friends and Sri Rama promised to help our king regain his kingdom which Vali had usurped. So, Sri Rama killed Vali when Sugriva and he were fighting and put Sugriva on the throne of Kishkinda."

"So, you, a Vanara, help a man who had killed, by stealth, the greatest Vanara king who ever lived. I admire your loyalty," Ravana laughed.

"Vali was slain for usurping his brother's kingdom," Hanuman said in reply. "How can you hope to conquer the slayer of Vali?"

"Tell me truthfully why you have come here, or I shall kill you," Ravana shouted.

"I am not afraid of your threats and I have no need to lie to you," the Vanara laughed. "I am Hanuman, son of the Wind God, minister to king Sugriva and servant of Sri Rama. I allowed myself to be captured only in order to be able to see you. I came in search of his wife whom you captured through a piece of trickery and imprisoned her. You have ten thousand wives in your palace and yet you have committed the sin of coveting another man's wife. You are going to pay dearly for this sin. Sri Rama is going to kill you, and your entire clan is going to be wiped away by the Vanara army of Sugriva. I am here to give you this message."

No one had ever spoken to Ravana in this vein before. His eyes blazed in anger and his whole body shook with fury. "Kill him! Cut him to pieces!" he shouted.

So far, I had been silent. From my seat at the head of the princes and nobles, I had watched the mounting drama of the day. But now, I felt the time had come for me to speak.

"Sire," I said raising my voice amid the din and buzzle. Silence fell on the assembly as I spoke. The Rakshasas stopped their preparations for doing away with the Vanara and looked at me. Hanuman too peered at me curiously. "This monkey has merely repeated what his master had instructed him to say. He cannot be punished for his master's words. To

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kill women, to kill men who had retired from the battle-field and to kill a messenger, however vainglorious he might be, are against all rules of warfare. Therefore, I beg of you, Sire, spare his life."

"You are right as usual, wise Vibhishana," Ravana replied good-humouredly. His anger seemed to have disappeared. "A messenger should not be killed. But he must be punished for the destruction he had wrought in the Nectar grove and for killing our soldiers." He turned to the soldiers who were guarding Hanuman. "Do not kill him. Set fire to his tail and chase him away from our kingdom."

Rolls of cloth were brought and wound round Hanuman's tail. But it seemed to go on extending endlessly. Then I remembered the words of the soldiers that Hanuman could make himself enormous or minute at will. Jugs of oil were poured on the cloth. Hanuman watched these proceedings non-chalantly and without resistance, as if it did not concern him at all. He was carried outside the palace, his tail was set on fire and he was released.

Things happened so quickly after that, it is difficult to describe them chronologically. Hanuman, instead of running away in pain and anguish, began to jump from roof to roof, from palace to palace, wagging his ever-extending tail and setting fire to every building in the city. The fire did not seem to hurt him in any way. At first, the Rakshasas tried to chase him out of the city, but as the fire began to spread, the heat and Hanuman's antics made them give up the chase. There was confusion and chaos everywhere. The entire city was ablaze within a matter of minutes and the population ran out into the streets, screaming and shouting. The beautiful city, so carefully designed, so lavishly built and so lovingly nurtured for years, became a heap of ruins in a very short space of time. Hanuman, surprisingly unharmed by the experience, escaped beyond the seas, to carry whatever message Sita had given him.

The ashes and the ruins were cleared by the orders of the king; and the architect, Viswakarma, was ordered to recreate the city in record time. But, for the first time in the history of Ravana's rule, a sense of apprehension began to spread in the Rakshasa army. It was realised that they were no longer invincible.

"If one monkey can create as much havoc as this, if he can defy our king and get away with it, how are we to face a whole army of Vanaras?" they whispered.

Hanuman's taunts and brave words, uttered in the presence of the king in open court, became general knowledge. Rama's valour and the possibility of his divine origin were also known to the commanders of the army. The most important fact of all, that

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Ravana's invincibility was not against men and monkeys somehow got round to the ministers and generals in the army.

But the surprising thing was that all this uncertainty about the future, the fear of possible defeat and death, did not create disaffection and disunity in the nation. On the other hand, it brought the king and his subjects closer together. There emerged a new unity and a renewed determination. While the possibility of defeat was discussed privately, each and every one wanted to fight and die the death of heroes on the battle-field. Not one Rakshasa wanted to yield; no one wanted to surrender Sita and make peace. That is, no one, except myself. "We have had a glorious life; now we will face a glorious death, if necessary," they whispered.

So the city was rebuilt in record time; Hanuman's visit receded into the background and the gaieties and the orgies were resumed. But the spies sent out by Ravana brought information about Sri Rama's movements, about the mobilisation of the Vanara army and its southward march.

One day, our mother Nikosha sent for me. "Listen, son," she said. "I believe Ravana has called for a meeting of the council of war tomorrow. Is that true?"

"Yes, mother," I replied.

She was old and her dull eyes were full of sorrow. Her frame was trembling. She spoke slowly and with difficulty.

"My eldest son will not come to see me and will not listen to an old woman's advice," she said. "He is arrogant, drunk with power and self-conceit. His past victories have blinded him to the reality of the situation. But you are wise and know the difference between right and wrong. You can see things calmly and dispassionately. You must go to the war council and advise him to return Sita and sue for peace."

"You know he will not listen to me, mother," I replied. "He will not listen to anyone."

"At this historic moment, there ought to be at least one Rakshasa who can raise his voice against injustice," she cried. "You are that one man. You are the only hope for the Rakshasa clan. So, you must try, my son."

So, I attended the meeting of the war council. Ravana came dressed in all his splendour, in clothes more suitable for the celebration of a victory than for planning the serious business of war. All the ministers, Kumbhakarna and Indrajit were there besides myself. After we had all seated ourselves, the king addressed us.

"As you are aware, since we ascended the throne of Lanka, no human, deva or rakshasa has dared to challenge our supremacy. They have all paid the tribute that is due to our power and prestige. But, now, two mere men expelled princelings from a small state have dared to oppose our might and humiliate us. Our sister,

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Surpanaka, was mutilated on some flimsy excuse and when we avenged that wrong by carrying away Rama's wife, a monkey was sent to destroy our fair city. Now we understand that they have gathered a vast army of Vanaras across the sea and are planning to invade our land." He paused and then continued again, when no one spoke.

"I have called this meeting," he reverted to the singular, "in order to devise a plan of action to destroy the Vanara army and to kill the men who have dared to raise their arms against us. I have taken this matter lightly so far, but now it has become serious. We have been insulted and humiliated; our authority has been challenged; our city has been burnt; our soldiers and generals have been killed. And now, we are threatened with invasion. The perpetrators of these deeds must be destroyed. Their friends and followers must be taught a lesson—a lesson they will learn and never again question the suzerainty of Lanka over the whole world. It is for you to tell me how their destruction can be achieved."

He had spoken well, presented his views in a persuasive and dignified manner and those present appreciated it. As was proper at a war council, it was the generals who spoke first. They, like their sovereign, were arrogant and boastful. "How can monkeys cross the ocean and invade us, Sire?" they asked. "They have no weapons and no armour. They have no elephants, chariots, or cavalry. They fight with rocks and stones and branches of trees. They are no match for the trained soldiers of our valiant army. The men who have dared to challenge us have not the accumulated weapons that you have acquired as a result of penance. Even if they should succeed in crossing the ocean, we shall destroy them in no time."

After the boastful harangues of the generals were over, Kumbhakarna, as the eldest of the king's brothers, spoke. In spite of his laziness and long periods of sleep, every one respected him.

"Sire," he asked, "when you picked this quarrel with the princes of Ayodhya, did you consult us? When Surpanaka came weeping with a bleeding nose and ears, did you attempt to find out what really happened in the forest of Dandakaranya? Or, before you planned to carry away virtuous Sita, did you ask for our opinion? When you imprisoned her in the Asoka grove, did you realise the enormity of your crime? Did you? When Hanuman came here as messenger and beautiful Lanka was burnt, you did not ask us what should be done. And yet, you ask for our views now, when it is almost too late." He looked round the assembly and everyone watched him intently. I was glad that at last someone was speaking sense. But the words he uttered next deeply disappointed me.

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"But the past is past," Kumbhakarna continued. "It can never be retraced. To return Sita now would be a humiliation for the Rakshasa clan for all time to come. We will be dubbed by the whole world as cowards who can bully the weak, but quickly succumb to the strong. If we did that, future generations would laugh at us. I would rather die the death of a hero against a worthy opponent than live by his mercy."

"Hear! Hear" cried the generals.

"But do not underestimate the princes of Ayodha or the Vanara army," Kumbhakarna warned. "They are powerful. So, let us not allow them to land on our soil. Let us attack them before they are ready, on the other side of the ocean."

"Well spoken, my brother" cried Ravana, as he got up and embraced Kumbhakarna.

It was now my turn to speak, but my nephew, Indrajit, forestalled me. He was always bold and impetuous.

"You, elders, are making a lot of fuss over a couple of men and a few monkeys," he shouted. "You talk as if our empire was in danger! Give me permission, Sire; I shall go across the seas, destroy them all and return before the day is over."

"Meganath," I cried. I deliberately used his real name and not his title, to put him in his place. "In the company of elders, you should wait for your opinion to be asked before giving it." That quietened him. Then I turned to Ravana.

"Sire! You are my king as well as my brother," I said. "Therefore, I owe a double loyalty to you. My love for you is as great as that of anyone in this room, and my loyalty, no less. But I beg you, Sire, please ponder over your actions—both past and future—calmly and dispassionately before coming to a decision. When you carried away Sita and imprisoned her against her will, you committed a grievous wrong. For this single act, we shall be condemned for all time. It is a blot on the Rakshasa nation. That blot can only be removed by restoring her to her lawful husband. To do this is not cowardice, as Kumbhakarna says, but merely the atonement for a sin."

"Rubbish!" cried one of the generals, but I continued, ignoring his remark.

"We have all heard that Rama is no ordinary person. We know that even as a youth, he killed the famous Rakshasi Tataka. He not only stringed but broke Shiva's bow before marrying Sita. He humbled the might of Parasurama. He has killed our brothers, Khara and Dushana, and slayed mighty Vali with a single arrow. After knowing all this, can we doubt his valour or his ability to conquer us? So, both on moral and on political grounds, I beg of you, Sire, restore Sita and make peace."

I had spoken as humbly and as politely as I could so as not to

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offend him. When I had finished, the entire assembly waited, tense and expectant, for the king to speak.

"Poor Vibhishana!" the king laughed and the assembled gathering visibly relaxed. "Striking a moral pose as usual when there is no need! Nothing has happened to Sita except that she is in our custody. She has not lost her nose and ears like our sister Surpanaka. And, as for your opinion about the might of our enemies, you must remember you have never been a soldier and are in no position to judge another man's valour. As for the divine origin of Rama, if it were true, what was Vishnu doing when I defeated Indra? Why did he not come to his rescue then? When I took Kubera's wealth, Vishnu did not come to protect him. No, Vibhishana, Rama is no more divine than you or I. Even if he were, I will not take a different stand. But I will tell you what," and he looked round the assembly to see if they were all listening. "You need not fight this war. You will stay inside the palace with the women-folk—doing your pujas and reading your books—while my commanders and I will deal with the enemy."

There was suppressed laughter in the assembly at the remarks of the King. I was annoyed at the implication of cowardice in his words, but I did not want to show my anger.

"But, Sire!" I remonstrated. "I am not speaking against war because I am afraid to fight. It is true I am not a great warrior, but I will not hesitate to fight for the sake of a righteous cause. But you are starting a war for upholding injustice and for the deliberate destruction of the Rakshasa race. To fight Rama is nothing short of suicide for everyone of us here. You should know that your gift of invincibility does not hold good against men and Vanaras. It was a deliberate limitation imposed by Brahma in case of just such an emergency. Do you not realise the flaw in your gift? Do you not realise that Rama has come in human form to fulfil a divine purpose? How can you stand against him and defeat him?"

Perhaps I had spoken more vehemently than I intended. Ravana trembled with fury; his eyes blazed in anger and his lips trembled. "How dare you talk to me like that?" he shouted. "Do you think I rely on Brahma's gift for my victories? It is my strong right arm that I rely on, nothing else!" He rose from his seat and from his enormous height, kicked me in my chest. It was so unexpected that I rolled from my seat and fell down. Ravana drew his sword, but one of the generals—I think it was Prahastha—held him back, soothed him and led him back to his throne. As I got up, feeling hurt and ashamed, he shouted, "I did not ask for your advice on war and peace, but only on the strategy of war. Do not

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presume to advise your king on matters of which you know nothing!"

For a long time, no one spoke. I did not know what they expected from me after such humiliation perhaps an apology. But I did not offer one. I had taken a step from which I could not go back.

"I am not sorry for this public insult," I said. "My only grief is for the Rakshasa race who are all going to perish because of your mad lust for a virtuous woman. For many years, I have watched your cruelty and arrogance and your oppression of hermits and sages and have kept silent. But I can no longer remain so."

"I know, Vibhishana," Ravana spoke. His anger seemed to have been spent. He spoke quietly. But there was bitterness in his voice. "I know your jealous heart. You have willingly accepted the luxury and the status I offered you, but you have never relished my greatness. You have secretly grieved over my successes and rejoiced in my predicaments. My wealth and power have been a thorn in your flesh. You have been biding your time to succeed me to this throne. Now, the time has come. Yes, you have the heart of a traitor." His words became harsh and he hissed at me. "A traitor, but also a brother; therefore, I do not wish to kill you. Leave me immediately. Go and join the man for whom you have so much affection."

"I will leave you", I said. "But I leave you and Lanka with a heavy heart. Today, your heart is blinded by passion, but when you lie on the battle-field, bleeding and at death's door, you will remember everything I have said today." I turned to the assembly. "Listen, my friends, if you think I am right and if you wish to live, then follow me."

"Go! Go!" shouted the king.

As I rose to go, I was surprised that four of the younger ministers got up and accompanied me.

I said good-bye to my mother and to my wife Saroma. "My dear," I told my wife, "I have been banished from the kingdom. Please look after Sita and see that she doesn't come to any harm." She agreed. Then, accompanied by the four ministers, I left Lanka.

□ □ □

THANKSGIVING TO GOD

We thank Thee for this place in which we dwell; for the love that unites us; for the peace accorded us this day; for the hope with which we expect the morrow; for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies that make our lives delightful; for our friends in all parts of the earth, and our friendly helpers in this foreign isle. Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind. Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies. Bless us if it may be, in all our innocent endeavours. If it may not, give us the strength to encounter that which is to come, that we be brave in peril, constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath, and in all changes of fortune, and down to the gates of death, loyal and loving one to another.

—Robert Louis Stevenson

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Deep down somewhere
within you is the call of the countryside.
Stand still and the call will
become audible.—Ed.

The Call of the Countryside

NEELA SUBRAMANIAN

YOU don't like to admit it. You are afraid that your friends will regard you as an oddity. But, deep down, you do have a longing for the simple things in life—for the countryside. It is there in all of us.

"No man hurries, except when catching flies, says an Arab proverb. Today everyone is hurrying and catching nothing, more than flies. But have you caught a person acknowledging the truth of this statement? No, you would say. For life is real, life is earnest. There is no time even to think about such things today. We are in feverish pursuit of material comforts. You don't know how to take it easy. Life passes you by almost without your being aware of it. Until it is too late to put back the clock.

You are proud to be a 'sophisticated" city-dweller. But, do you realise that your individuality is lost in the teeming population of a sprawling city? Some of you don't even know your neighbours. W. H. Auden's' poem *The Unknown Citizen* paints a frightening picture of the anonymity of the life of the modern man who is known by numbers and not by name. He can't even call his soul his own, for "in everything he did, he served the Greater Community." Man's activities are nothing more than the "feats of a highly-intelligent animal," according to a famous writer.

This could be a description of YOU, tomorrow.

You regard your "country cousins" with a patronising smile, conscious of the fact that you live

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in a "civilised" area, and can take for granted all modern "conveniences"—shops, cinemas, theatres, night clubs and restaurants. These provide a handy weapon when you argue about the advantages of city life and, in your opinion, the disadvantages of living in the country.

All right. But where do you go for your holidays? To the hills or by the sea, away from the unceasing bustle of the city? How many of you cherish the memory of a golden day spent in the country, of the wonders of Nature, the breath-taking beauty of a sunrise or sunset by the sea?

Take a train journey to any place and you will be horrified by the mushroom-growth of factories on the extreme out-skirts of a major town. Factories with their tall, ugly chimneys, belching smoke day and night and smothering the entire surroundings under a pall of smog. They stand out like infected sores in what was, at one time, a tranquil countryside. Many conferences held on environmental control reveal the alarming daily increase in pollution. There has been a phenomenal rise in the number of factories in India in recent years. Just close your eyes and think for a moment—factories contaminating the air with smoke, spilling industrial wastes into the rivers.

And you. You are guilty as the rest. The noxious exhaust fumes from your car, the smoke from your cigarettes, the insecticides you spray on trees and soil—all contribute to the pollution of the atmosphere. The very air you breathe is smoke-laden and harmful. And the water you drink is not sweet, clear water; it has been "purified" and tastes and smells disgustingly of chlorine. So can you say that you feel fresh and healthy in a city all the time?

You are a product of this space-age. But, can you honestly say that you know contentment and peace of mind? You are far too busy trying to keep up with the Joneses.

Your civilisation is insidiously creeping up everywhere. You enthusiastically draw up plans to "develop" those places which had hitherto been untouched by man. Remember the wistful and evocative words of the old song *Green Fields*.

Once there were green fields
kissed by the sun,
Once there were valleys where
rivers used to run...
Gone are the green fields where
we used to roam....

You need some physical relaxation in order to achieve mental peace, to commune with your Maker. The best hope for man lies in going back to nature. That means, going back to the land.

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The Golden Temple

PERHAPS the best method of acquiring an understanding of the veneration in which a Sikh holds his scripture is to visit the Golden Temple in Amritsar during the early hours of the morning.

Numerous foreigners include Amritsar in their travel itineraries for the express purpose of seeing the Golden Temple, and then rob their visit of much of its potential value by going there during office hours.

The truly interesting activity at the Golden Temple (or at any other gurdwara in India) is largely confined to the early morning and late evening. The best time to arrive is when the Temple opens at 3 a.m. If this can be managed the rewards are considerable, and amongst other things one can witness the daily installation of the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

No one observing this event could possibly mistake the degree of reverence which is bestowed upon the Book. It is, indeed, a little unnerving, for it demonstrates with abundant clarity that he who seeks a deeper understanding must assuredly find himself treading upon unusually sacred ground. The volume is greeted with affectionate reverence because for the Sikhs of today it is the Guru. The same spirit which successively inhabited the bodies of ten men is now believed to dwell in this particular Book. This is no mere fundamentalism of the Western variety. The Book is endued with a personality in the literal sense of that word. Through it the Guru speaks to his followers in the same manner that he spoke to them while present in the flesh. Let us hasten to add that this is not the same as bibliolatry and the Sikh quite rightly rejects the suggestion that his belief necessarily involves *worship* of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The Guru, while in human form, expressly disclaimed this right, insisting that worship was due to God alone. If the human Guru was not to be worshipped, then neither is the scriptural Guru.

It is of vital importance that the student of Sikh religion and

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society should appreciate the depth of this reverence, just as he should understand the offence which can be caused by the use of tobacco in the presence of orthodox Sikhs. The odium which in Sikh circles still attaches to the name of Ernst Trumpp derived in no small measure from his culpable insensitivity in this respect. During a visit to Amritsar he made the disastrous mistake of smoking a cigar while consulting a copy of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The *gianis* who observed him doing so were, needless to say, outraged and the incident is remembered to this day.

The place where most foreigners will observe a copy of the *Guru Granth Sahib* is in a gurdwara or, to be more precise, in a public gurdwara. Strictly speaking, any room which contains a copy is thereby constituted a gurdwara and Sikh families who can afford the extra room commonly set one aside as a family gurdwara. This will normally contain little except the sacred volume set in an elevated position. If the worshippers are to sit on the floor a low dais will serve the purpose. This is invariably the case in the Panjab itself, but in England chairs are sometimes used and in consequence the elevation of the volume has to be raised. The book will always be draped (normally in expensive cloth) and will commonly be beneath a canopy. While it is undraped it is usually protected by the use of a fly-whisk. Whenever it has to be moved it should be carried on the head, and if being transported along a road some form of advance warning should be given in order to ensure that the people who witness its passing may show proper respect. On festival days a copy, mounted on a truck or bus and properly protected, will figure prominently in the customary procession.

Within the structure of Sikh worship the *Guru Granth Sahib* is central in much more than a merely physical sense. All aspects of Sikh worship relate directly to it and practically the entire content of all worship is drawn from it. Many visit the gurdwara simply for *darsan*, or *'audience'*, with the *Guru Granth Sahib*. This consists of entering the gurdwara, prostrating oneself before the Book, making an offering, and accepting *prasad* from the *granthi* ('reader') responsible for the care of the volume. Even when formal service is in progress this is a common pattern. The formal service consists almost entirely of singing hymns from the scripture. Groups of three singers (*ragis*) lead the congregation and those present may, if they wish, join in hymns which they know. A garland may be offered and in return there may be given a garland, previously offered, which has meanwhile been in close proximity to the sacred volume. When the flowers wither the proper method of disposal is to cast the garland on flowing water.

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The only important exceptions to the rule of drawing exclusively from the *Adi Granth* are, first, the occasional use of selections from the other approved scriptures; and secondly, the regular recitation of *Ardas*, the so-called Sikh Prayer. The *Ardas* (literally 'Petition') is an unusually interesting text which, because it evolved during the eighteenth century, expresses with unusual charity the ideals of that period. Earlier forms evidently concluded with an exhortation to accept the Panth as Guru. The version currently in use concludes with a similar exhortation to acknowledge the *Guru Granth Sahib*. The concluding passage is worth quoting, for no words are more familiar to a Sikh and none express with greater clarity the doctrine of the spiritual Guru embodied in the scripture.

agian bhai akal ki
tobi chalaio panth
sab sikhan kau - jhukam hai
guru manio granth
guru granth ji manio
paragat guran ki deh
ja ka hirada sudh hai
khoj sabad men leh

From the Timeless One there came the bidding,
In accordance with which was established the Panth.
To all Sikhs there comes this command:
Acknowledge as Guru the Granth,
Acknowledge the Granth as Guru
For it is the manifest body of the Masters.
Ye whose hearts are pure,
Seek Him in the Word!

The prominence accorded the *Guru Granth Sahib* in regular gurdwara worship extends to all other Sikh ceremonies. The passages which the devout Sikh should recite in the morning and evening are taken from it. When he is married he circumambulates the sacred volume instead of the sacred fire, and when he is cremated the ceremony is performed in its presence. Before he proceeds to his daily labours he may 'take a command' from the scripture. This custom consists of opening the volume at random and reading the composition which appears at the top of the left-hand page. The passage which is turned up in this manner is believed to bestow a specific guidance for that particular day. A similar procedure is followed when choosing a name for a child. Once again the *Guru Granth Sahib* is opened at random and the first letter at the top of the left-hand page must be the first letter of the chosen name.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SIKH COMMUNITY—FIVE ESSAYS by W. H. McLeod. Printed by Oxford University Press, Post Box 31, Bombay-400 001. 120 pages. Price Rs. 35/-

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HINDUISM and its Self-Identity

DR. P. NAGARAJA RAO

In our anxiety to advertise Hinduism as the most universal religion, let us not lose its self-identity and obliterate all its distinctive features.

HINDUISM is a religion with many excellences to its credit but at the same time, it is not without its distinctive, unique doctrines relating to its sense of values and way of life. The admirers of Hinduism in their eulogy of the religion should not obliterate its distinction and its contrast with other Semetic religions like Islam and Christianity which are prophet-founded and not based on non-human compositions—(*apaurusheya*) Vedas. Witness remarks like this one "Hinduism is essentially non-credal, and is no one religion. It is a league of religions."

Hinduism is not a country without a capital, nor is it a formless lump of creeds and sects with no distinct doctrines to hold them all together. The core of Hinduism can be spelt out in the form of the following doctrines.

The Hindu establishes the existence of God, soul, Dharma, *on the authority of the Vedas*, not on the evidence of *perception* nor through *inference* and reasoning. That is the reason for its name as *Sanatana Dharma*. The term Hinduism is the gift of the Persian to those who live across the Sindhu river.

Secondly, the Hindu philo-

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sophers believe in the eternal, immortal, beginningless nature of souls.

The souls take on many births according to the fund of good or bad deeds they have done in their lives. No act of man is private, no act is unimportant. Each carries his good acts and bad acts and has to pay for it and reap the consequences. This doctrine of Karma makes for the freedom of the will of man and frees God from the charge of partiality and cruelty to some and favour to others. The God of Hinduism is justice and love. If God is all love for all people there need be no police, no punishment for any crime, that would cut at the very roots of morality. It is this, that the law of Karma gives in the provision of a number of births for the souls to effect their spiritual growth, that distinguishes Hinduism from semetic religions which admit only of one birth for man.

It is again the doctrine of Karma that makes men reconcile to the fact of the prevailing inequality in all the aspects of human existence and not beat their breasts in jealousy or rail against God. It affirms human freedom and makes man the architect of his fortune and misfortune. This doctrine enables one to bear patiently one's suffering. Prof. Paul Deussen refers to the case of a blind person whom he met. Not knowing that he had been blind from birth, Deussen sympathised with him and asked due to what accident the loss of sight had come upon him. Straight came the answer without any bitterness, "some crime committed by me in my former birth." The universe to the Hindu is not a "chance-universe." From the movements of the atoms to the happenings in history, it is governed by laws. The Lord is the director of the physical and moral universe. It is not a chapter of accidents. The great scientist Maxwell observes: "The book of Nature is really a book and not a magazine, a coherent work of art, and not a hodgepodge of mutually irrelevant snippets." This is another distinct doctrine that marks out Hinduism. It makes for morals and responsibility.

Sow a thought and reap an act
Sow an act, reap a habit,
Sow a habit, reap a character,
Sow a character, reap a destiny.

Probably the Shakespearean critic Bradley had this in mind, when he acclaimed "that character is destiny." There are some who crudely state that doctrine, and cruelly interpret it to mean Fatalism. Karma is not fatalism, it makes man responsible for his acts. The doctrine affirms personal effort and does not destroy the sense of responsibility. Man is not governed by any unknown or unknowable fate. Yagnavalkya writes—"as a chariot cannot move on a single wheel, so destiny can-

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not achieve its end until it is aided by human endeavour (I—351) without present action, past destiny cannot actuate itself, and it is always open for men to help or hinder it." Destiny is modifiable by human effort. *Purusakara* and *Daiva* are both necessary for men. To the Hindu, there can be no 'greater charge' than attribute things to chance.

Yet another important doctrine that characterises and marks the *self-identity* of Hinduism is its social philosophy and ethical outlook. It recognises not only the world is governed by the law of Karma which is built into it. The Vedas describe this as the law of Rita which means, uniformity of Nature is inbuilt which maintains the cosmic order and does not admit of any accidents. The Divine is the source of both the natural and the moral law. So man must not only be devout to God but also do his duty, for the Lord is righteousness and dislikes evil and wrongs.

The individual soul's sojourn needs a working and abiding faith in the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, its transmigration to fulfil its role, the concept of Karma and Dharma and the ideal of liberation as the foremost aspiration, the destiny of man, and all these are established on the authority of the scripture.

Life is a purposeful process and existence has meaning and is a goal-directed activity. The doctrine of the four types of human personality, four Varnas, based on their character and the four stages of one's development called the *varnashrams* are distinct doctrines that make for manifold diversity and also integral unity. The literature on the way one should live one's life is extensive and has been furnished in the Dharma Sastras, Srutis, Smritis, etc. The framers of the codes have not been unaware of the need for change, for they have provided for such changes based on the ages (*Yuga Dharma*), extraordinary situations (*asaadharana Dharma*), rules in crisis (*aapat dharma*) and rules for the administration of a country (*Raja-Dharma*). The two Cantos of *Mahabharata*, the *Shanti* and the *Anusasana* are treasure houses for the principles of social reconstruction. In our anxiety to advertise Hinduism as the most universal religion, let us not lose its self-identity and obliterate all its distinctive features.

Whosoever studies to reach contemplation (i.e. unitive knowledge) should begin by searchingly enquiring of himself how much he loves. For love is the motive power of the mind, which draws it out of the world and raises it on high.

—St. Gregory the Great.

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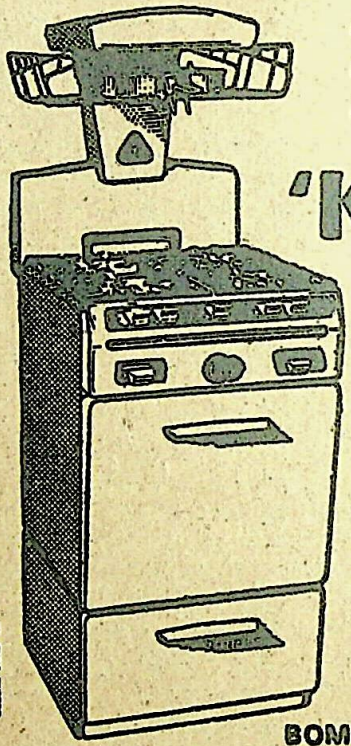

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16

Vaakya Vritti

Of Adi Sankaracharya

SWAMI
CHINMAYANANDA

अजडात्मवदाभान्ति
यत्सांनिध्याज्जडा अपि।
देहेन्द्रियमनःप्राणाः सोहमित्यवधारय ॥

Ajada-aathma-vad aabhaanti
Yath-saannidhyaath jadaa api
Dehendriya manah praanaah
Soaham ithyavadhaaraya

Know yourself to be the One Entity in whose Vital Presence, body, senses, mind and Pranas, though inert, appear to be endowed with Consciousness like the very Self, "I am He."

(*So-Aham*)

The mind-intellect and the other tools of experience are indeed inert. They appear to be conscious and dynamic only when they are in the presence of the Self; this is an illusion in as much as in the Self nothing else exists; it is '*Poorna*'. That the body is inert, this is seen during such conditions as sleep, swooning and death. In death not only conscious activities cease, but even the breathing stops and the body-temperature becomes totally absent. A dead body is as inert as a piece of stone.

Sajateeya-Vijateeya-Swagata-Bhedarahitam-Vastu Poornam

Thus, not only the body is, in its true nature, totally inert, but so too, are mind, intellect, Pranas, etc. All of them constantly are undergoing endless modifications, and those that undergo changes (*Vikari*) constitute *Anatma*. Matter is inert.

The Self cannot be directly perceived by our equipments-of-knowledge. Yet, by inference, we can perceive the existence of the Self, as the very spring of our Consciousness, by the grace of which all inert equipment act and function as though sentient.

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The sense-organs are inert when the mind is not in contact with them. The mind itself is inert; it has its light only when the Self bursts upon it. The moon is lit up only by the light of the sun, and it, in its turn illumines the stretches of land under it. Thus, the Light of the Self, reflected in the mind-intellect equipment (*Chidaabhaasa*) is that which lends intelligence to the sense-organs.

This subtle source of all Consciousness, the Self, is your Real Nature. Assert and realise, 'I am He' (*So-Aham*).

How the Self is the one that enlivens even the mind also is shown in the following.

□ □ □

PERSEVERANCE

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance; it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with camels. If a man was to compare the effort of a single stroke of the pick-axe or of one impression of the spade with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded by the slender force of human beings.

—Samuel Johnson

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HINDUISM

in Retrospect & Prospect-8

AS I SEE IT

U. N. DHEBAR

Q. Is the influence of religion over the masses on the wane? If not, how can corruption and such other pointers to widespread deterioration in ethical and moral values be accounted for?

A. The word 'Hinduism' does not occur in our scriptures anywhere. The word Hindu is a way of describing the totality of philosophic thought which has descended to us from the self-experience on the part of the saints and seers who had attained self-knowledge through tremendous self-discipline which included discipline of mind as well as body. It is, as it were, a concept with an emphasis on universality of spiritual self that abides in all creatures in the universe at large. The masses as well as classes as well as the elite have absorbed this concept in their own way according to their own capacity for grasping the significance of this concept.

In my opinion, the influence of religion has waxed or waned according to the capacity of the generation first to adore and then to digest the truths inherent in this concept. This variation is not confined to masses. Even classes or elite are amenable to the varying influence.

Religious thought in India has never been dominated by masses, though some seers like Valmiki etc. have influenced it to an extent. Religious elite—the mandarins and warrior classes had plentiful of say in fostering its structure. No wonder, to the extent these two classes have been immune from the corrosive influences of mundane existence and have concerned themselves with the transcendental values, the masses and classes have found it easier to grasp the values and to digest them and translate them into their day-to-day life.

Q. The traditional charge against Hinduism is that it is fatalistic, that it inhibits progress by

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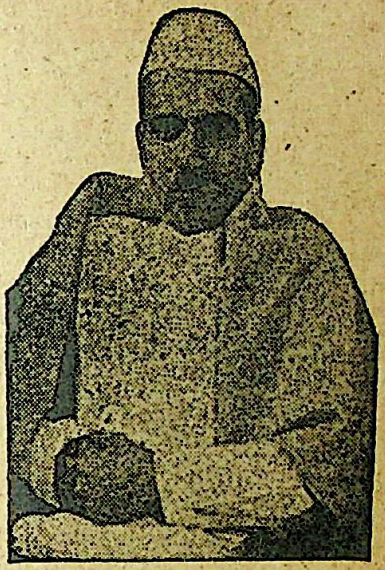
making people slaves to the belief in the inevitability of whatever is to happen. How far is this charge true? If false, how can the stigma be removed? What is the basis for such an accusation which is being advanced even today by well-meaning, highly educated people?

A. This charge is born of sheer ignorance. Four aspects of life are inevitable—*janma, mrityu, jara, vyadhi*. The Hindu religion has emphasised the principle of retributory justice both in this life as well as the next, the basis being the principle of accountability for all actions performed. It emphasises rightly the need to bear in mind the aspects that are inevitable.

I think the charge of the educated is that an average Hindu is more concerned with the life after death than his mundane obligations. But Hindu philosophy holds essentially to the middle of the line as the most appropriate. It envisages the short span of life and strikes a balance between the worldly happiness and the transcendental experience. This positive aspect has been more preponderant all through its course as the *Bhagavad Gita* shows. One failing of Hinduism has been casteism. Casteism is certainly an inhibiting factor. It was never conceived as a rigid *sine qua non* of religious discipline. But it has worked out as such. To that extent Frank Moraes can be considered correct in his assessment.



Shri U. N. Dhebar, who had been a leading lawyer before he abandoned the legal profession and entered on his political career, is a well-known figure in Indian public life and one of the prominent followers of Mahatma Gandhi.

He was Chief Minister in Saurashtra for six years and has enjoyed the great distinction of being elected on three occasions as President of the Indian National Congress.

He has also served on important Government Committees, and was till recently the Chairman of the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

Man intends the natural consequences of his act. Hindu religion cannot absolve itself from the responsibility of perpetuating the discriminatory approach although its philosophic ethos is opposed to it.

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Q. It is said that the greatest strength of Hinduism is its catholicity, breadth of outlook, but that this is also its greatest weakness in that there is very little common prescribed religious observances, obligatory for all, *as in other religions. Is it necessary and possible to outline certain basic minimum observances for all Hindus?*

A. The other failing described in this question is common to all religions. There have been differences in the observance of rituals between the missionary and the laity in all religions. Amongst the Hindus the four disciplines—*Gyana, Dhyana, Karma* and *Bhakti*—have been there. Sankaracharya tried to regulate the first by establishing four ashrams. The Raj Yoga is another field which had its votaries who devoted a good deal of effort in regulating it. Karma Yoga, the central theme of the *Gita*, has its votaries too. *Bhakti marg* Acharyas have tried to formalise for the laity ritualistic observances in their own light. Some comparison can be made with other religion only in the field of Bhakti Yoga. It has to be admitted that these observances have not been organised on the basis of the entire mass as one army of faithfuls. But there is the other side of the question too. Such regimentation may not be effective as a means to inspire one to evolve himself into a truly religious being. I doubt very much if common observances have helped in generating a sense of oneness in other religions. A sense of oneness is a qualitative result of something else which all the religions have yet to acquire and propagate. A sense of oneness is a different thing from religious egoism. Many Christians have been done to death by their brother Christians. Jewry has not found this sense of oneness despite its rigid ritualism. This applies to Islamic denominations as also to the Mongolian hordes.

What is it that can bring about this sense of oneness among the Hindus? Not external practices. It has to be a manifestation of a qualitative appeal.

Q. Even a well-read, widely travelled and enlightened Editor like the late Shri Frank Moraes equated Hindu ethos with casteism. Will the fundamental values of Hinduism be in any way affected by the eradication of casteism towards which a concerted effort is being made now at all levels? If Harijans who constitute a sizeable population among Hindus are made to feel that their very religion exposes them to ridicule, how are they to love that religion? In other words, how can all sections of Hindus be made to take equal interest and have the same sense of belonging to Hindu religion?

A. Nobody can stop the elimination of casteism if Hinduism is to survive, for casteism and untouchability are born of the same attitude of mind and wrong understanding of the genuine concept of Hindu philosophy.

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Q. Swami Vivekananda has given a positive suggestion that one of the best ways for Harijans to command respect among all sections of people is to learn Sanskrit, the study of which is being neglected even by Brahmins today. What incentives can be given to Harijans to learn Sanskrit, the repository of Indian culture and religion?

A. I cannot disagree. But this would be a long way off.

Q. It is said that while the "Srutis" embody the eternal truths of Hinduism, the "Smritis" which embody rules of conduct need to be revised according to the dictates of the changing times. Will such a stand be acceptable to all sections of Hindus? If so, how can new "Smritis" come into being and who will give them sanction and sanctity?

A. Customary law has always supplanted the Codes of Smritis. This has been the legal position also. The latest effort has been the Hindu Code Bill. Sir Hari Singh Gour made an effort in this direction as did Sir Har Bilas Sarda. This pioneering effort can be undertaken in other respects too.

Q. In the Kali Yuga, Bhakti has been described as the most suitable and easiest of paths for God-realisation. Yet, how is it that Vedantic teachings with their accent on Jnana are being given the pride of place by noted savants.

A. The elite will not be satisfied with merely Bhakti Yoga. We have to put up with this frailty of human beings. But Bhakti Yoga should be emphasised to the utmost so as to reinforce the faith of the masses.

Q. Is a Guru essential for one to enter the spiritual path and attain the goal? How does one recognise one's Guru?

A. Yes. Hinduism is a Samskara-oriented religion. A Guru is essential. Mother is the first guru who looks after the body. Father is the second one who introduces us to the world of "cause and effect". A spiritual leader is needed to lead us out of that world into the world of spirit. Matri Devo Bhava, Pitri Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava. The root of the term Acharya is one who practises what he preaches.

Q. Will "Mantras" lose their sanctity if they are not in Sanskrit?

A. Yes. One great thing about recitation of mantras is that thousands have recited them before us. This builds up faith and reinforces it.

Q. Are fasting and such other dietary regulations necessary for leading a spiritual life?

A. Yes. The body and the mind require to be kept completely clean. This is like keeping pure milk in a pure vessel. The spiritual message is like that pure milk.

Q. What is the role of rituals in religion? Are they to be discouraged as is being advocated by some reformists? Or are they to

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be encouraged? If so, in what form?

A. This should be left to the individual seeker and his guru. There should be nothing in the nature of something enforced from above. Most of our rituals have their own justifications. A good guru will explain this to his disciple before enforcing them.

Q. There are various Samskaras prescribed in the life of a Hindu right from his birth to death. Many of these "Samskaras" are not being observed today. Should they be revived?

It is said that the "Karma Kanda" in the Vedas has almost gone out of use except for a few rites which remain in vogue for marriages, shraddhas etc. Is it advisable to revive the Karma Kanda with its stress on the performance of various Yagnas?

A. Not all can be revived even if we wish it. But disinterested and devoted observance of the four disciplines will benefit the individuals and the society.

Q. Hinduism has been defined as a Way of Life. In the present context what should constitute the way of life?

A. Gandhiji has set the pace with Ekadash Vratas with Anasakti—Yoga as its centre piece. I believe in them. Love leading to the supreme self-abrogation in the interest of the entire human family; Truth with its emphasis on identity of thought, word and action, non-covetousness, Brahmacharya, trusteeship, physical effort, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi, anti-untouchability, humility.

Q. It is not possible for all sections of Hindus, be they Advaitins, Dvaitins or Vishistadvaitins, to come together instead of remaining isolated?

A. I would not make that vain effort, for there are no warring groups. All that is there is freedom of thought turned into confusion.

Q. What is the future of Hinduism?

A. Nothing can be more harmful to Hinduism than its self-conceit. Hindus should stick to Bapu's recipe of Namrate Vrita Nischaye.

Q. As the world is coming to be divided into just two classes—atheists and theists—is it not advisable for all religions to come together? And what positive steps can be taken in this direction?

A. Here again I would not make a vain effort. I would simply recommend mutual tolerance.

Q. Do you envisage a different role for Hinduism in the Western countries where the influence of other great religions has been felt for centuries?

A. I would not like to take up any aggressive movement. I would like to feed Hindus, who have made West their homes, with the literature as Bhavan's publications are doing.

Q. What is your view regarding proselytisation? If you are con-

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vinced that Hinduism has a great role to play would you think of proselytisation?

A. I am opposed to proselytisation. A convert as a result of an external effort acquires only a split presonality. A convert by faith does not require any such effort.

Q. Are changes visible in Hinduism—in its doctrinal content, mode of individual and collective worship—as a result of its contact with the West?

A. Yes. But the heart of the matter continues to be people's love for Ramayanam, Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita and Bhajans of Saints. So long as these are there, nothing can harm the Hindu religion. □ □ □

GOD AS MOTHER

Worship becomes easy and spontaneous when God is viewed as Mother. No codes of conduct operate in the affectionate relationship of child and mother. Ignorance of the modes of worship causes no concern in the mind of the devotee. And God the Mother pays no heed to the bodily behaviour of the child. The kicks that come from the kid are no offence to her; rather they are a source of delight to her. With great concern she brings up the baby. Unmindful of her personal discomforts, she tends the child day and night. They fall short of nothing who commit themselves to God after the manner of the babe to its mother.

—Swami Chidbhavananda

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Pains and Pleasures of Old Age

V. N. HOON

I

At first I thought the title of this essay should be "The Problems of Old Age." But on further consideration I felt this heading might give the impression that old age and problems go together. Problems arise and remain, whether for the old or for the young, so long as this changeful and evanescent life exists—only their complexion differs. So the heading was changed to "The Pains and Pleasures of Old Age." For indeed old age has its own pleasures too, which are perhaps denied to the young. As I proceed with the essay, the reader will readily find what are these pleasures and of course what are the pains.

The first part deals with some of the general causes that have specially given rise to the present-day problems of elderly people, and the specific causes that bring about the pains and hurts involved in these problems. Mentioned are also the saving features, most of which lie in one's own self; and how the wise consider these pains and hurts could be lessened or eliminated and how suffering could be sublimated.

Some of the causes that give rise to these pains are financial insecurity, fear of ill-health and death, loss of chair and power, indifference of children, loss of friends, housing difficulty, and the unplanned years of young age. Methods whereby these so-called pains could be neutralised are discussed.

The second part deals first with a few aspects that appear to involve what one may or may not do when getting on in years, and in doing or not doing transmute one's pain into pleasure. Some of what may be termed as very mundane matters will also be touched upon; the externals like dress, manners, speech, exercise, food and

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fasting, others like a sense of humour, temperament, the habit of relaxing and the mental outlook.

As a panacea to loneliness of the old will be suggested the idea of building an Elders' Colony for the residence and close, cooperative living in self-help in an environment conducive to leading a life of peace and activity, tranquillity and happiness in the penultimate stages of the journey of life.

Many of the matters mentioned may appear to be idealistic and perhaps not easy of realisation. But if we have some ideals before us, worth striving for, the effort itself brings considerable recompense. What were once ideals are now practical achievements. Some of the pains and pleasures touched upon will seem to be present and some others absent in different degrees in the case of different individuals. Every reader will no doubt draw his own conclusions.

But I trust the final picture is not one of tragedy, as if pain, untruth and error were always stalking our footsteps. But it will be one of possibility of leading a full and hearty life right up to the end, taking joy out of every aspect, with hope, happiness, contentment and peace that passeth understanding. Thus, it is that we keep the torch of life burning brightly not only at one end, but, as years roll by, burning it at both ends in a final consummation with the Eternal.

WITH the average span of human life considerably lengthened, the problems of old age assume very special importance; and this topic is of equal interest to the old as to the young; for the young too are heading for old age.

The breaking up of the barriers of the states, the opening up of the village to the urban influences, the breaking up of the joint family system, the disintegration of local *baradaris*, the far-flung places of employment of the sons and the grandsons and even the daughters of the family and the rising tide of individualism and the idea of self before the others all these in a way have combined to accentuate the problems of the older generation.

There is in fact a tremendous increase in the absolute and relative number of people over the age of 65. More persons are living to old age beyond 65 than they were a decade ago. The average span of life now, even in India, is 45 and not 26 as was a quarter of a century ago. So the problem of old age has become the problem of the younger generation too, for they also, as I have said, are going to live to a longer old age, perhaps even longer than of the present old generation. It is for these reasons that the growing

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importance of smoothening the declining years of life for the individual and the care and welfare of the aged by the society have to be appreciated.

Getting old today is not the same as getting old was 50 or even 20 years ago. It is infinitely more difficult due to the stresses and strains and the fast-growing tempo of modern life.

The vast number of so-called graduates being turned out by the universities is daily swelling the number of the unemployed. Early retirement of old hands has therefore become urgent and almost a mania. Faulty system of education which is not job-oriented and merely produces third-rate individuals who become incapable or unwilling to take to any productive work and the wrong-headed, blind continuation of the old system in the schools and universities have had profound effect upon the problem of older people. Matters have come to such a pass that the age of retirement is bandied about and changed from time to time as if the persons whose services are dispensed with are not human beings.

It is not realised that an older man has greater experience, greater devotion to work, lesser accident liability, lesser absenteeism, more dependability and certainly less inclination for aggression to foment trouble and take part in arson and loot that had till recently become so common. Why doesn't he therefore get the job or why is he retired as soon as it is possible? Because we have come to bow down to the threats of violent youth, we have made it a habit to suffer adverse decisions that slight old age; and the youth in turn is taken in by glib promises of creating greater employment potential— potential that cannot take shape so long as there is a blind increase in the schools and colleges that impart useless education; and every time that potential, even if tried, is outstripped by growing unemployment. I would in fact apply Malthus's Theory of Population in a slightly different way by saying that whereas the employment potential increases in arithmetical progression, unemployment increases in geometrical progression.

To come back to the subject, old age is indeed regarded as the end of all efficiency and quick work—as a regrettable incident necessary for others and not for themselves—by ministers and employers, who will also turn the age of 55, 58 or 60. Everyone seems to regard the ageing person as some one who is just in the way, impeding progress, slow on the street, awkward on the crossing and the steps, slow getting off buses—yes, and slow to die. The old person thus becomes a problem.

The emotional picture of old age generally is: insecurity, apprehension, discouragement, disap-

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ponment and disillusionment. If we study this picture closely we would find that there are a number of reasons that bring the pains of old age.

The first reason is financial insecurity.

The second, fear of ill-health.

The third, loss of the chair—the loss of power and prestige.

The fourth, the so-called indifference of the children.

The fifth, gradual loss of friends.

The sixth can be the housing problem.

And over-riding all these is the unplanned years of young age.

The first and the sixth reasons, that is finnacial insecurity and the housing problem are material and factual. The other reasons are mostly due to emotional upsets and are capable of correction by a correct mental outlook. A large part of the degenerative effects of old says, a famous physician (Dr. John Schindler of New York) are due to emotional upsets; and but for these degenerative diseases, the aged person would go along smoothly and fairly vigorously to a happier and more kindly consummation. However, since time cannot bring physical degeneration, one has to face the facts of life. But in spite of Time's inexorable march, a change towards the right kind of emotions is bound to produce a reversal of the degenerative changes and halt to a degree what is called 'natural senility.' The miseries of the old can other-

After a brilliant record in the field of studies and sports, at the Government College, Lahore, where he took his B.A. (Hons.) and M.A. Degrees with Scholarship in Economics, Shri V. N. Hoon joined the Punjab University Law College, Lahore, and passed the LL.B. in the first division. In 1962 he joined the Income-tax Department and held important positions in the Ministry of Finance, Revenue Department and the Ministry of Food, Government of India.

On retirement as Commissioner of Income-tax, he was appointed by the Central Government as Financial Adviser to the National Cooperative Development Board and the Central Warehousing Corporation. Enrolled as Advocate of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, he is widely travelled and keenly interested in things cultural.

With his rich and varied experience, he has contributed several articles to well-known journals and magazines covering sports, music, administration, controlled distribution of foodgrains, warehousing of agricultural produce, income-tax law and practice and the financial adviser's role in public undertakings.

He is the President of the Theosophical Society at Chandigarh. A versatile speaker, he is also a keen writer of short stories. He has served on the Chandigarh City's Advisory Committee and as a Senior Active Member of the Rotary Club has taken keen interest in schemes of social welfare. His recently published book 'Evolution of a Soul' is a biographical sketch of a living sage, Sant Gulab Singh. The Bhavan has brought out his another work, "The Symphony of the Bhagavad Gita."

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wise, be so fundamentally devastating as to induce emotional upset into frank mental derangement, labelled by the doctors 'senile dementias.' They are really emotionally affected degenerative dementias.

Let us consider the seven reasons that I mentioned, in some detail.

The fear of financial insecurity becomes a bugbear due to many reasons. The till recent phenomenon of ever-rising levels of prices of even the necessaries of life, to high direct and indirect taxes, increasing hesitancy to employ people older than even 45 or 50, the habits induced by high standards of living, the lessening tendency and inability to save and lay by and a score of other subsidiary reasons, bring about financial insecurity. And add to this the fear, however unfounded it may be, of extreme policies that would encroach upon private property and the right to manufacture or trade. When these ideas take hold without the quid pro quo of social security, there is bound to arise a serious feeling of insecurity and the worst hit are older people.

Then there is the *fear of ill-health,* that is always dogging the old peoples' frail footsteps—the fear that complete disability may be just round the corner. That is why ageing persons pray for sudden death—afraid that age may confine them to their bed tomorow with a wasting disease that they could never get rid of, with no one to care enough and bear the burden for long. Indeed it takes a lot of courage in the aged just to act cheerful and never say anything about these fears. Death to them is closer at hand as every day passes, whereas to the younger people it is something remote, unknown, that can perhaps not happen.

The third depressive pain is *the loss of the chair and therefore of power and prestige.* This is more a psychological than a physiological fear. One has just to prepare oneself for the day when one would shed the trappings of power and be just himself. Some persons feel this loss so acutely that they have been known to have succumbed to this as if it were a disaster of the first magnitude. But there are others who look forward to the day of retirement when they would be free and uninhibited in their approach to life. It is these people who survive any shock that may temporarily result by the change of their life-long environments and vocation. Indeed loss of chair and patronage or authority makes little difference to them who have exercised their power correctly, justly and scrupulously honestly. I have known people who held high posts and yet avoided taking any personal service from the peons or other class IV servants. I have also known people who have not allowed their children or any family member even to use

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the official paper, pencil and eraser—so meticulously honest they have been. It is these people who do not feel the pangs of retirement. They have learnt to rely on themselves and their personal means for their private and household work and requirement. But alas! such persons are now very rare and even if there are a few, they are looked upon by the others as freaks and not quite natural.

The fourth reason for the pains of old age is *the indifference of the children*. This adds to the financial and the health insecurities. Today, by and large, it is usual for children to stand by without emotion and see their old parents suffer; and if the elders are on a visit, to feel irksome and watch their departure with a sigh of relief. The 'nursing home' attitude has gradually become acceptable even in India, in the urban society in which we live. It is not going to be changed for decades if ever. In a communist society where family life has been torn, it is hypothetically assumed that the State will take care of the aged. But in practice that results in carelessness and hardhearted approach. Of course for those who have enough money or means, it may be better to lie ill in a nursing home, but how many are there in that fortunate list?

A young scoundrel would say: "Why doesn't the old fellow get a job?" He doesn't appreciate that it is getting harder for a person over 45 or 50 if he was in the Defence Services, or over 55 or 58 if in the civil service or in a vocation to pick up a fresh line or job. The truth is it is terribly hard on the old folks. And if unfortunately it is the old widowed mother, then the conditions become harder still, because there are more chances than not that she would be utterly dependent upon the children; and if the sons are married, it is harder still. The old parents remember when these same children had to be fed, were taught their first lisping syllables, were tutored their first tottering steps with such anxious care. They had to be protected, requiring long hours of time, labour, anxiety and hope. And the compensation? For these children they had lived and these children they loved more than themselves. Now who returns the love? Fortunately parental love asks for no reward. It is sheer love for love's sake. But the fact is that there are plenty of mothers and fathers who have broken hearts because they have been so damnably let down in their hours of need. These broken hearts, as the doctors would put it, mean severe pituitary induced stresses—emotionally somatotrophic hormone, that may have its attending joint, arterial and kidney effects. In modern life many of these old parents who feel disappointed and disillusioned by their children have themselves failed to set an exam-

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ple of solicitude for their own parents when they were young. They have not therefore set an example to their children at the time when the children's emotional attitude could be strongly affected. The classical instance is of the mother-in-law daughter-in-law relationship. How the same daughter-in-law, when she in turn will become the mother-in-law and pass through the same experience is a lesson that we learn when it is too late. But here again, one's mental attitude has to be attuned to the modern age. Parents often expect too much. In fact they should not expect anything at all and when that is the attitude, there is little disappointment, and if there is disillusionment, it loses its sharp edges.

Another factor is the gradual *loss of friends*—friends who once used to pay visits, who used to drop a cheerful word, who once wished with greetings, men and women who once offered a helping hand, who perhaps sat by in the long winter evenings and the long summer afternoons, even their own dog who once wagged his welcome—these friends and comrades have one by one all gone. Some who posed friendship for some gain or favour when these could be bestowed have shed away. And so the old folk feel left alone, severely and painfully left alone. The only silver lining can be the company of the grandchildren. But that too is perhaps available only when these grandchildren are very very small. As they grow up they also feel it boring to keep company with the old man or the old woman. Even otherwise, more often than not, even their company is denied on the plea that 'grandparents spoil the child.' But where the sons and daughters are discerning enough and iron has not entered their souls, they allow and encourage their kids to befriend the grandpa or the grandma. It is here that a new heaven can open for the old people. For they can teach, entertain, and join in the fun with the grandchildren and tell them about their experiences and about so many great things of the world and of their country in a language that the children would understand and even look forward to—matters for which their father and mother have no time. But if even that joy also is not available, then the tragic loneliness even while living with the sons and daughters can be killing.

Have you ever in the deepening twilight stood out on a lonely sweep of the earth—felt an awful lonesomeness pulling you down into the ground—a lonesomeness so deep, as if to say: "Is this and only this is left and no more?"

When one feels at the end of one's tether and utterly lonely, one tries to lean towards the Incompherensible, the Indescribable, the all-Pervading Something that is called Ram, Rahim, Prabhu and God. It is then that one tries to

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befriend that Unknown Friend who never leaves. It is then that man seeks to realise *that* Self within the self that will not forsake whatever happens. To those unbelievers this can be merely an escapist form of diversion, just as drinking or as a matter of fact any other pastime can be. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that many who have become friendless have found solace in the contemplation of that Something, that Power which gives them sustenance, strength and hope. And that is more a matter of faith and of course the faith that can be buttressed by reverent study, prayer and worship.

But as a human being it is natural that after 60, 70, 80 or even 90 one would expect some appreciative recognition of long years of hard, honest work, of bringing up a family, of keeping the high traditions of the ancestors and of carrying on through all the trials and tribulations, all the difficulties and hazards of the past years. Celebration of the birthday, a small present, even touching the feet or a little kiss or a hug would make amends for past apathy. It is not realised by the young persons how much a small act of consideration and love brings forth love and affection of the elder with compound interest.

It is not for nothing that our ancestors had the custom of every morning bowing with joined palms and touching the feet of the father and the mother first thing in the morning, not only by the sons and daughters but more so by the sons-in-law and the daughters-in-law and their children.

That act of respect set forth a graceful day of work and play for the whole family. It set forth a particular tone for the whole day, blessed by the elders as it were the whole progress of work and life. But alas! this beautiful practice has almost entirely been given up in the modern families, and if at all, a mere 'Hello' greets the Daddy and the Mummy. And eventually when the old man and the old woman have passed away, a posthumous good word or two is the best that the children and the society can give, without their realising that they too will grow old.

Then there is *the housing problem*. For the old couple to be left alone in a big house, built when they were still not so old, even when the house is their own, can be as great a problem as being left without a house. This problem is not so visible in the rural areas as the trees and the outside platform can be the usual refuge. The relations and the village community still retain a sense of duty if not regard and respect for the elders.

But in the towns, the large number of old people, pensioners and the superannuated find it to their dismay that their pensions and other means are getting more and more inadequate to cover the

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increased rentals, the food costs and the other expenses. For the middle class and the lower middle class a room if available is dreary and inhospitable where one must be ashamed to have visitors, even if there be any. Sharing living room in the streets and mohallas may have the supposed advantage of some company but often the company is irksome, inhospitable or downright unfavourable. Also the tidiness and clean surroundings of the working life's house are missing. Unfriendliness and filth add to the disgust for life.

And so, old age, which is supposed to be the golden period of life, becomes the dark age—mean. miserable and distressful. Those between 45 and 55 think they have their troubles enough; but when they are over 65 they will really know what trouble is. Even to bend down to pick up the handkerchief becomes a bit of a problem, leave alone the other big problems of old age.

This brings us to the question of *the unplanned years of the young age*. Those years if unplanned are sure to hurt in the old age. Our emotional states in old age can be said to be the quintessence of our earlier dispositions. The reactions one allows to oneself at 20 become more obvious as one grows older. The acid tongue, the jaundiced vision and the battle-axe approach to the ordinary incidents of life start early and become more and more pronounced as one gets older. It is therefore necessary to plan ahead for old age.

Many people handle age poorly simply because they never handled any part of their lives well, and so ageing years for them mean going deeper into the lackadaisical apathies, the inborn prejudices and the futile storms of old age. The inabilities of younger days grow larger like a giant snowball toward the end. If one is young, there is still time to start planning ahead.

If a sporting spirit, a sense of determination, and an outlook of optimism are blended with a sense of humour early in life, these qualities stand in great stead in the after years and tend to become a habitual sixth sense. But the main ingredient for feeling comfortable is contentment; and that is something inside and not outside and that can still be had for the trying. It is however a truism that poverty, squalor, lack of care and lack of proper shelter can break the bravest contentment-effort to pieces. It is, therefore, for the society to ensure that the outgoing generation which brought the social fabric into continuous being is not just set aside and treated as an outcaste. Whether 20 or 60, the sooner a maturer idea of what one's programme will have to be is formed, the happier will be one's old age. Maturity in old age does not come suddenly. It is a process of development and involves maturity at any age. It means essentially finding enjoyment in the surroundings, amongst friends and

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family, in work and leisure, in bird, flower, mountain and stream. It means thoughtfulness and consideration for others, especially to be shown towards the less fortunate, without expectation of return or reward.

So, whether 20 or 60, one can still learn kindliness, love for one's fellow-beings, a cheerful outlook and an eye for the thousands of enjoyable things lying scattered around us, enjoying which costs nothing, but at the same time is so precious. All through life we have the choice to make our self our friend or foe. How few realise that we can raise the self by the self or depress it at any stage of our life. Only, the older we get, the habit of making the choice in one certain direction gets more and more difficult. We have the choice of reacting with equanimity, resignation, courage, determination and cheerfulness, or with crabbiness, grumbling, instability, irresolution, worry and apprehension, and lack of sympathy. We should not become hard-hearted, sarcastic and of a gloomy temperament that men and women shy away from us.

Only if we know the long-term consequences of the choice, we would make the right choice, *right now*. But, as in the case of many simple truths, the better choice is so obvious that it is missed. Let the parents and the teachers who look after or come in touch with the young beware and make it crystal clear firstly what the alternatives are and secondly that the choice is theirs to be made right now.

Given the right emotional choice, which is nothing but *yoga*, that is living in harmony, there are some other material fundamentals that in my opinion buttress the original right choice for carrying it to ripe old age.

These are a plan for future finances, a plan for a place to live and a plan for expansion of interests. To depend upon some one, even if it is one's own off-spring, for money or for shelter or for the creation of worth-while interests is a tragedy beyond tears. These plans simply mean a habit of saving something regularly to add to retirement income, even by cutting the present scale of living; a home to live whether your own or on a modest rent, and the desire for developing hobbies as a pleasant pastime—the hobbies acquired or dreamt of in youth, but which await development and flowering in old age. These could be gardening, carpentry, sewing, embroidery, music, drawing, painting, reading and writing, playing cards or even small-scale farming or keeping an orchard or a flower-garden, or collecting of curios, coins, stamps, rare plants and this, that and the other, whatever suits the temperament. A useful hobby not only gives joy as an end in itself but can also bring some income. If one is fond of pictures, these can be seen occasionally, but only those that will entertain,

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not the tragic ones, for there is enough of tragedy in the world without having to pay for it.

Social service is one of the best fortes of elderly persons and the joy of serving and giving becomes an end in itself.. If 'collect, collect, collect' has been the trend in the days of ambition, strength and youthfulness, it should be 'take away, take away, take away' in the days of growing towards the evening of life. There is a peculiar joy in that, which only those who give can have.

Gradually unburdening oneself of the trappings of life is a process of becoming free from bondage both materially and mentally. I am not one of those who decry the urge of desires in the youth, but certainly it seems but appropriate that these endless desires should taper down as one advances in years till they get well-nigh extinguished. Curbing of desires for the material comforts of life has brought our nation material poverty, which has not helped the healthy growth of spiritual and moral values of life. On the other hand, over-emphasis of the spiritual side has impoverished the community. There has, therefore, to be a proper balance and that balance tilts in favour of spiritual things as years roll by in the individual's life.

Indeed retirement must never mean retiring into the shell. Even a little trade or business or some work, be it ever so small, can keep one occupied usefully. The main idea is to keep oneself occupied in some sort of work, paid or unpaid, as will suit the circumstances. Time must not be allowed to hang heavily on one's hands, for that leads to mental degeneration. A healthy brain is just as important in old age as at any other time. A fallow brain becomes like a fallow field that gets choked with weeds. The old could go to a Night School, take a Correspondence Course, learn another Language, write down yarns and stories of their own interesting experiences and articles and even theses on one's favourite subject. The field for keeping busy is vast and endless. If nothing else, old men could take a hand in the kitchen, learn cooking and how to keep the stores in order. Old age is the time to learn many exciting and novel things, to get more acquainted with those books or pictures or problems which were regretfully laid aside because of other priorities in the younger days.

Since those of us who are young are going to be old some day, it is up to you to start making people see the problems of the aged as realistically as possible for you are going to be there too. If you are already aged, cooperate with the inevitable march of time with grace. Do not unduly mourn the gradual loss of friends, but seek new ones. Life is as empty or full as we make it. We have to try to be flexible and adaptable in our thinking and avoid prejudice and criticism of the young for

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being what they are. Indeed the company of young people of both the sexes is invigorating and exhilarating, for it is the young who keep the elderly folk in youthful spirits. It is a fatal mistake to sermonise the young, especially the independent-minded young of today. They have to be approached with a friendly attitude and treated with a smile and a nod and regaled with humourous anecdotes of one's rich life. This will create in them a condition called 'gerontophilia' or 'fondness for old people.' Their appreciation of you and what you say is the best tonic for you.

In one of his beautiful essays Rev. J. T. Sunderland had said: "Open your heart, as Jesus did, to children; seek their society; let them know that you are their lover. And their answering love, their joy, their laughter and the sunshine of their faces will have a marvellous power to keep your soul youthful."

If one is lucky to continue to have old friends, well and good—cherish them. If not, it is best to cultivate a large circle of acquaintances and make new friends. Keeping alive interest in one's neighbours and in the society around will bring rich dividends of happiness, provided one does not impose oneself upon them. The fact that one's old friends are growing fewer should be a reason for prizing those that remain. The best friend in old age can be the wife or the husband, as the case may be. It is never too late to cultivate this unique friendship, even if there has been mutual coldness in earlier life. When sex no longer plays the chief role, the spirit takes its place and that is of enduring satisfaction.

In prescribing the methods of keeping young, I would quote Rev. Sunderland again. He says: "Interest yourself in new things, new lines of thought, new lines of reading. Within your limit of strength, begin new enterprises. No matter if you have only a year before you, or a day, begin; make the most of the time you have been left."

Again, he says: "Care for things beyond yourself. Dig wells in the desert for others to drink. Plant trees to give shade and fruit to others after you have gone. Be sure to cherish and nourish love in every possible form. Keep all the fountains of affection in your heart open and flowing. Let none get clogged even for a day by indifference or carelessness or selfishness. Love is life. It is the very highest kind of life. It is the life of God in the soul. Every one that loveth is born of God. Love Nature. Keep companionship with her. Love the sunshine. Live in the sunshine. Watch for the coming of the first Spring flowers and the first Spring bird. Never miss a beautiful sunset. Gaze often and long at the stars in the night, that their benediction and peace may fall upon your spirit. Thus your soul may defy

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DO IT NOW

The foolish man, loving the boggy side-path of procrastination rather than the firm Highway of Present Effort, says, "I will rise early tomorrow; I will get out of debt tomorrow." But the wise man, realising the momentous import of the Eternal Now, rises early today; keeps out of debt today; carries out his intentions today; and so never departs from strength and peace and ripe accomplishment.

That which is done now remains; that which is to be done tomorrow does not appear. It is wisdom to leave that which has not arrived, and to attend to that which is; and to attend to it with such a consecration of soul and concentration of effort as shall leave no possible loophole for regret to creep in.

—James Allen

old age. Believe that the stars shine with His light, that your pulse beats with His life, that your heart's love is a drop that has come to you from the Great Infinite Loving Heart."

I would end this part of the essay by quoting the following lines from the *Upanishad*:

"Old age and decay lay hold of the body, the senses, the memory, the mind, but never of the Self, the Looker-on. The Self never grows tired. Only the body grows tired of supporting the Self. The Self never grows blind. Only the windows of the senses become darkened with dust and rain. The Self never forgets. Only the inscriptions on the memory fade, and it is well that much should be forgotten."

(To be continued)

"Trust not to the so-called rich, they are more dead than alive. The hope lies in you—in the meek, the lowly, but the faithful. Have faith in the Lord; no policy, it is nothing. Feel for the miserable and look up for help—it shall come.... I may perish of cold or hunger in this land, but I bequeath to you, young men, this sympathy, this struggle for the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed.... Vow, then, to devote your whole lives to the cause of the redemption of these three hundred millions, going down and down every day."

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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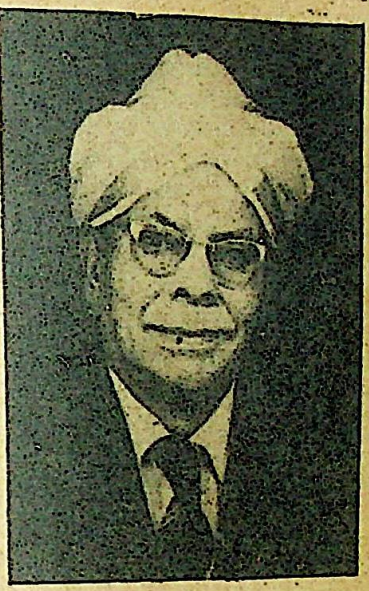

Homage to a great educationist

V. KAMAKSHI

The story of "NR"—a phenomenon in the field of women's education—as narrated by the Principal of the Seetha akshmi Ramaswami College, Tiruchy.

—Ed.

"THE development of the great institution (Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College, Tiruchirapally) was a saga of Shri N. Ramaswami Iyer's achievement and it also demonstrated what single-minded devotion to the cause would achieve," wrote the late Shri M. Patanjali Sastri, a former Chief Justice of India, on a visit to the College not many years ago. Shri Ramaswami Iyer died on March 28, 1976, at the age of 79.

N. R., as he was affectionately called, was the Founder of Savithri Vidya Sala Hindu Girls' High School and Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College, and Kamakoti Vidyalaya.

The Savithri Vidya Sala was started in 1938 and Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College in 1951. The latest addition to his educational edifices is Kamakoti Vidyalaya started in 1973 to blossom into a Higher Secondary School on the Central School pattern.

Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College caters to the needs of higher education exclusively for women. Affiliated to the University of Madras, the College has a strength of 2,739 students and 115 faculty members, imparting modern education in the background of Bharatiya culture and tradition. Outside the city of Madras this is perhaps the biggest women's College in Tamil Nadu.

It is now a post-graduate institution offering five courses of

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study—M.Sc. in Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry; M.A. in English Literature and Economics. It is a matter for legitimate pride that this is the only women's college in Tamil Nadu which offers courses in M.Sc. (Physics) and M.Sc. (Chemistry). Ten major subjects including Home Science and Music, on which emphasis is laid, are offered at the degree level. It has 10 sections of Pre-University Course with about 90 students in each section.

The College is situated in an area of about 35 acres right in the centre of the town and with all the necessary buildings, laboratories and library costing easily a crore of rupees. As one enters the main gate, he finds himself in a lovely vast expanse of peace in a pastoral setting and sylvan surroundings reminding one of Santiniketan. He reaches the temple at the centre —temple of Sri Rama and Sri Seeta—and from there he proceeds for about a furlong, along a tarred road with three-storeyed buildings on one side and neem trees on the other.

There he finds the spacious auditorium—Shri Akhilandeswari Hall—designed to seat 3000 persons—with a large playground in front. He returns to the other side of the temple along a similar road flanked by similar buildings and neem trees—a sight reminding him of a happy combination of Nature and human endeavour.

If he pauses to look back at the vast expanse of less than half an acre and the thatched sheds doing duty for class rooms, the process of growth will appear fantastic, all made possible by the unceasing and unrelenting endeavour of one man, N.R.

I joined this institution as a member of the teaching staff in 1951, the very year of its inception and took up the reins of the institution as its Principal in 1959. Ever since, it has been my proud privilege to draw inspiration from the great and noble Founder.

It is a matter for particular satisfaction that an assiduous endeavour is made for the cultivation of God-consciousness in the minds of the young girls. To see all students assemble every morning before the commencement of the classes and sing songs in praise of the Almighty—of Sri Akhilandeswari, in particular—would never fail to inspire a thrill in any one. Special encouragement is being given here to the study of Sanskrit.

Our ambition is to introduce Sanskrit as a major subject at the B.A. level and elevate music to the post-graduate level. Due emphasis is laid on co-curricular activities and the students of this college are second to none in developing music, dance and histrionic arts.

Our institution is verily a near-residential University. There are 12 blocks of hostels with two more in the offing. There are two hostels exclusively for staff members with self-contained rooms with all facilities. The names of the hos-

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tels—Chamundeswari, Gayatri, Lakshmi, Saraswathi, Eswari, Ranganayaki—are all significant. There are about 1300 resident students and 40 resident staff members including the Principal. There are students from all parts of the State and from outside the State as well. The hostel is a miniature India comprising, as it does, students and staff belonging to various communities—flowers of different hues forming one nice bouquet.

It was a matter for great pride and gratification to find during my recent visit to Bombay that some of the former alumni of this College were employed in S.N.D.T. Women's University, Tata Fundamental Research Institute, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and other institutions.

To me personally and to the teaching faculty, N. R. was a living example of the spirit of *Yagna* (sacrifice) and *Dharma* (service). He represented to us the ideal of the *Karmayogi* of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Blessed with an impressive personality, endowed with an incisive intellect, commanding a comprehensive culture, he made daring demands and achieved astounding results, thus vindicating immortal Kalidasa's dictum:

Aakaara Sadrusaha Pragnaha
pragnayaa sadrusaagumaha!
Aagamaihi sadrusaarambaha
aarambaha sadrusodayaha! !

—(Raghuvamsa)

He had a capacious, benevolent heart full of sympathy for the unfortunate though it was sometimes clothed in an imperious exterior.

In a rare measure we found in him the charm of Rabindranath Tagore, the mellowed wisdom of Madan Mohan Malaviya and the fanatic zeal of Bharat Ratna Karve—(with whom our Founder had occasion to come into contact when the Maharishi was touring the South)—all great architects in the field of education. But while Pandit Malaviya was an emperor commanding tributes from Zamindars, Rajas and Maharajas, poor N. R. had to be content with small driblets from great numbers and hence his achievements are a near-miracle in such circumstances.

A scion of an orthodox and religious family steeped in ancient culture, Shri Ramaswami Iyer was proud of his father, Shri Natesa Ghanapatigal, who was a great Vedic scholar. He always considered that his first duty was to relieve his poor father of his near-impossible responsibility of maintaining the family, which he succeeded in doing even in the first or second year of his profession as a lawyer. By dint of hard work, and by virtue of his legal acumen and forensic skill, he soon scaled the heights of the profession. A man of varied interests, he was associated with a number of social and cultural organisations.

In 1938 the spark of "divine discontent" within him made him out-grow his professional interest. An "inspired restlessness" took

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possession of him and it culminated in the birth of Savithri Vidya Sala and Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College. He had a strong feeling—rather an obsession—that a Hindu institution would succeed in spreading women's education only by attracting the middle class to modern education and by allaying suspicions about possible deviations from our tradition and culture.

The High School—Savithri Vidya Sala—started with a poor strength soon became very popular. It was this encouragement that made N. R. start Seethalakshmi Ramaswami College. In those days, girls' education, especially higher education, was at a low ebb, and only a few well-placed families were keen on educating their girls. Neither the middle-class nor the poor were interested. Education was expensive. Girls' education was almost considered a luxury and a needless liability. The Sarda Act, though it brought about a thorough change later on, was resisted by a majority of the Hindus at the beginning. Women teachers were also not easily available. What is more, the non-recurring expenditure of the high school and the college was staggering.

Shri R Venkataraman, former member of the Planning Commission, described the situation more picturesquely "The gigantic proportion which this institution has now assumed bears testimony to Shri N. Ramaswami Iyer's selfless devotion to the cause he has undertaken. From a lawyer demanding a fabulous fee he has become a mendicant begging for contribution to build up and sustain the institution. There is no parallel in the country to his outstanding service, selfless dedication and devotion. I have always had the highest regard and admiration for his untiring effort to build up the attractive educational complex in Tiruchy".

The obstacles which Shri Ramaswami Iyer faced in building up the institution were insurmountable. Securing qualified women staff members especially for teaching science courses was really a stupendous task. There were difficulties in finding suitable women for handling post-graduate classes; and these had also been solved in due course, with the result we have today a good number of efficient staff members in all branches. It is a matter of legitimate pride that there is a good number of Ph.Ds on the staff, which is a rare phenomenon in a women's college, especially in the South.

A remarkable feature that sustained him in this almost impossible work was that many of the leading lights in the country visited the institution some time or other and inspired him.

Among them were, Dr. V. V Giri, Dr S Radhakrishnan, Dr Rajendra Prasad, former Presidents of India, Shri M Patanjali Sastri, Dr. C P Ramaswami Iyer, Shri Bishnuram Medhi and Shri K.

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Kamaraj. The crowning glory was the visit of the Jagadguru, Shri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, in May, 1960.

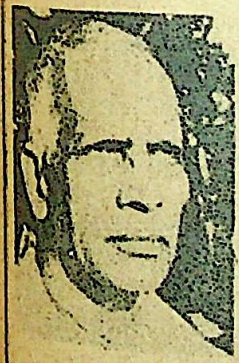
Let me conclude by quoting Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's words on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of S.N.D.T. University, Bombay, which will be apt for our present purpose. "I am quite convinced that women's education and advancement in every field is essential for our national growth. If I may say so, it is even more important to pay attention to it than to men's education, for there are always sufficient people who are interested in men's education".

A word about Shri N. Ramaswami Iyer—the man. He had a forceful and forthright way of expression and yet an infinite capacity to win round everyone who came into contact with him. Many even today are at a loss to know how Shri Ramaswami Iyer could mobilise such colossal resources, more than a crore of rupees, working all the time single-handed.

To them Shri Iyer's reply often was that he was never alone and that he had behind him always Goddess Eswari's hands of *Abhayam* and *Varadam*. He rose like a meteor to found institutions to be run in the background of our tradition and culture. His indomitable will, unflagging zeal, tenacity of purpose, and fearless candour called for greatest admiration.

His sense of humour, robust optimism, abounding sincerity, childlike simplicity and inimitable and infectious affection and above all his irrepressible enthusiasm will continue to be our inspiration and guidance. When and where will we see the like of him—the great *Karmayogi?*

□ □ □



BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN

Chowpatty Road, Bombay 7

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA, the celebrated monk of the Ramakrishna Order, will deliver three lectures on "Bhagavad Gita and Modern Life" at Bhavan's Kanji Khetsey Sabhagriha.

May 21, 1976	..	6 p.m.
May 22, 1976	..	6 p.m.
May 23, 1976	..	5 p.m.

ALL ARE WELCOME

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...Without Comment

THE Country's (India's) Constitution is fairly well-balanced and I do not think there is any need to alter the structure.

—*Smt. Indira Gandhi*

COMPUTERS are temperamental. They are like ladies. You have to coax them or they go wrong.

—*The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Harold Macmillan,* former Prime Minister of U.K.

WITHIN the next decade India will be one of the most powerful nations in the world.

—*G. D. Birla*

ALTHOUGH technological advance has brought the world closer, it looks as if the minds of men are drifting away.

—*Shri V. S. Khandekar,* Jnanapith Award Winner for 1975

I want to be Prime Minister and 1976 would be a good year for it.

—*Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,* British M.P.

THE trouble with statistics, someone once observed, is that they are too often used as a drunken man uses a lamppost—for support rather than illumination.

—*The Economist*

REMEMBER! Only dead fish flow with the stream.

—*Melville de Mellow*

THE Kremlin leaders had found a way to "sow wheat in Kazakhstan and reap it in North America."

—*People's Literature,* Chinese monthly magazine

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Notes and News

BHAVAN'S MEGHALAYA KENDRA:

PRESSING requests for starting new Kendras of the Bhavan are being received not only from even remote corners of the country, but also from abroad.

The latest addition to the Bhavan's Kendras is the one started in Meghalaya in December last through the initiative of Shri K. Subramaniam of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Shillong, Meghalaya.

An Organising Committee with Shri P. R. Kyndiah, P.W.D. Minister, Meghalaya, as Chairman has been set up. Shri Peter G. Marbaniang, Minister of State for Education, is the Vice-Chairman and Shri S. J. Dass, former Chief Commissioner, Mizoram, is the Secretary. Shri T. R. Rymbai, Secretary, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, and Smt. Nalini Natarajan, wife of Shri Natarajan, Secretary, Industries Dept., Govt. of Meghalaya are Joint Secretaries and Shri J. N. Bowri, prominent businessman, is the treasurer.

The other members of the Committee are: Shri V. Ramakrishnan, Secretary, Home Dept., Meghalaya Govt., Shri M.I.S. Iyer, D.I.G., Meghalaya Govt., and Shri S. K. Datta, Correspondent, "The Times of India," and Shri K. Subramaniam, who, as mentioned above, initiated the move to form the Kendra.

It is hoped that in this border State of India, where the Bhavan has for long been wishing to start a Centre, the newly-started Kendra will soon strike deep roots among the local population and spread the message of our immortal culture among them and help instil in them greater affinity with the rest of the country.

GEETA JNANA YAGNA IN MADRAS DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY CELEBRATIONS

"THE Bhagavad Gita is a universal scripture. It aims at solving the multifarious problems that the humanity faces today. It is a practical guide to everyone for a better and prosperous living. All must become yogis, according to Gita, and yoga is skill in action and it is equanimity of vision."

Swami Gambhirananda of Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, made this observation on the concluding day of the eight-day Gita Yagna by Prof. T. K. Narayanan, American College, Madurai, at Vivekananda Hall, Perambur, Madras, held under the auspices of the Divine Life Society Branches of Madhavaram and Perambur from March 21 to 28, 1976, in connection with their anniversary celebrations.

Prof. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Director of the Advanced Research Centre in Philosophy, Madras University, while inaugurating the Yagna said: "Gita is the mother of all. It is the scripture for all. If Upanishads are the cows, then the Gita is the milk. As our representative, Arjuna received the message Divine from the Lord on the battle-field. Though the message was delivered thousands of years ago, it is applicable even today,

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to solve all kinds of human problems."

Prof. Narayanan in the course of his exposition said: "Kurukshetra is our mind only. The good and the evil tendencies which exist in our mind are the Pandava and Kaurava armies. The constant fight going on between them is the Mahabharata war. With the grace of God, the evil nature can be easily conquered and one can get established in the good and thereby reach the Godhood. This is what Gita symbolises, and possessing the two essential requirements of Sraddha and Bhakti—faith and devotion—one can make his life peaceful and blissful."

Sri Krishnamurthy, President, Madhavaram Divine Life Society, welcomed the audience.

Shri Sivakozhundu Mudaliar, President, Perambur Annadana Samajam, congratulated Prof. Narayanan on his effective method of Gita exposition.

Shri K. Vanamamalai, Vice-President, Divine Life Society Branch and Shri A. S. Narayana Rao, President, Perambur Divine Life Society branch, also spoke on the occasion.

SANSKRIT DAY CELEBRATIONS AT MADURAI DLS:

"THE study of Sanskrit is of vital importance to every Indian not only because it is the treasure-house of rich literature and valuable devotional works, but also because it is the strong uniting factor of all people in India," said Prof. T. K. Narayanan, Editor, "Samaya Jyoti," in the Sanskrit Day celebration held in the Divine Life Society, Madurai branch, situated at Sri Meenakshi Temple.

Shri V. Santanam, Editor-in-Charge, "Dinamani," distributed the prizes and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's certificates for the winners in the Sanskrit Examinations and "Pavai" competitions and appreciated the activities of the Divine Life Society in promoting the study of Sanskrit and national unity.

Prof. G. Sankararajulu, Govt. Arts College, Karur, explained the significance of the Pongal festival.

On the Tiruvalluvar Day function, which coincided with the Pongal festival, Shri S. T. Nova, Asst. Prof. in Tamil, American College, Madurai, spoke on the greatness of Kural and Valluvar.

Shri T. K. Sundaram, Secretary of the Madurai Divine Life Society branch, proposed a vote of thanks.

BHAVAN'S JAMMU KENDRA:

THE eighth Annual Function of Jammu Kendra was held recently at Gulab Bhavan Jammu under the Chairmanship of Dr. J. N. Bhan, Vice-Chairman. The Convocation Address was also delivered by Dr. Bhan.

One of the prominent features of the function was the keen interest evinced by Muslim candidates in learning Sanskrit. Sardar Bibi of Kot Bhalwal school was awarded special consolation prize for passing the Saral Sanskrit Bal Bodh Examination with high marks.

As many as 43 other prizes were also awarded to various students winning first, second and third positions in different Sanskrit examinations.

Besides I, II and III cash prizes of Rs. 50, Rs. 30 and Rs. 20 respectively were awarded to the Sanskrit teachers preparing the maximum number of students for various Saral Sanskrit examinations during the year 1974.

Later seven Running Trophies were also awarded to the Principals of the following schools for the best performance of their schools in the Saral Sanskrit Examinations during 1973 and 1974 sessions: S. R. M. L. Higher Secondary School Jammu; Govt. Girls' High School, Akhnur; Jagrit Niketan, Jammu; Kendriya Vidyalaya, Jammu; Govt. Hig

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School, Kot Bhalwal: Institute of Model Education & Research, Jammu, and Arya Kanya Vidyalaya Purani Mandi, Jammu.

EXTENSION LECTURES:

PROFESSOR S. A. UPADHYAYA, Jt. Director (Academic), Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, was invited by the Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, to deliver a series of lectures in the Departments of Sanskrit and Politics under the U.G.C. Extension Lecture Programme.

Delivering three lectures in the Sanskrit Department, he gave an historical evolution of the concepts of 'Kavyadoshas' and 'Kavyagunas,' up to the time of Dandin.

In his three lectures on the "Arthashastra" in the Department of Politics, Prof. Upadhyaya discussed the "Raja Mandala" concept, the "Shadguna" concept and the problem of Kautilya, Machiavelli and Morality.

Dr. P. S. Gupta, Head of the Hindi Department, Dr. B. H. Kapadia, Head of the Sanskrit Department and Prof. Jashbhai K. Patel, Head of the Gujarati Department presided over the three lectures respectively.

Dr. S. K. Kshirasagara, Head of the Politics Department, welcomed the guests and Dr. M. Bakshi of the Department of Politics proposed a vote of thanks.

Dr. Kurtakodi, Dr. Suresh Trivedi, Dr. (Smt.) Chitra Shukla, Prof. V. D. Shukla and others participated in the discussion after the lectures.

Prof. Upadhyaya was also invited to be the Chief Guest at the Annual Functions in the Departments of History and Politics.

ITALIAN SCHOLAR:

DR. GIULIO COGNI, renowned Italian Scholar, visited the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Post Graduate and Research Department, on February 2.

Dr. Cogni has published a lyrical translation of the Bhagavad Gita in Italian and has written essays on Vedanta. At present he is working on the Ritual Cannibalism. He is also a musicologist.

He appreciated the work of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in the field of Indology and discussed his research works with Prof. S. A. Upadhyaya, Jt. Director (Academic), Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, and Prof. R. T. Vyas.

GUNTUR KENDRA:

Exhibition of Paintings:

AN Exhibition of paintings of the collections of the Andhra Pradesh Lalit Kala Akademi, Hyderabad, was successfully conducted in the Bhavan's Auditorium in Guntur from January 26 to 29.

The exhibition was inaugurated by the Kendra Chairman, Shri R. Kuppu Rao, Collector of Guntur, on the Republic Day. He lighted a lamp and cut the ribbon to the accompaniment of 'Nadaswaram' by renowned Nadaswara Vidwans.

On the 27th instant Shri Raghunath Kulkarni, AIR artiste of Hyderabad, rendered devotional songs composed by him on 'Mantralaya Swamiji' which were greatly appreciated. Shri V. Umamaheswara Rao, Member of the Exhibition Committee, and Shri Kuppu Rao explained to the audience the genesis and the purpose of the exhibition.

Shri C. S. N. Patnaik, Chairman of the Exhibition Committee, spoke about the art and glory of painting.

There was a "Kavi Sammelanam" on the evening of the 28th instant in which the following poets participated: Sarvashri Jammalamadaka Madhavarama Sarma, Jandhyala Papaiah Sastry (Karunasri), C.L.I.N. Sastry (Amarendra), Prasadarao, Kulapati, K. Thejovati, V. Suryanarayana (Bhanu), R. Kuppu Rao, P. Raja Ram and Y. Ananda

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Ramaiah.

The meeting was presided over by Shri G. Ramanujulu Naidu, District and Sessions Judge, Guntur. Shri Jammalamadaka Madhavarama Sarma introduced the poets. The performance was greatly appreciated by the packed audience and it is proposed to bring out the compositions in a separate brochure.

The concluding day's function was presided over by Shri V. Srinivasa Rao, I.P.S., Deputy Inspector General of Police, Guntur, and the Vice-Chairman of the Guntur Kendra.

He congratulated the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan on conducting the exhibition and said it would help develop a sense of involvement in Bhavan's activities on the part of the students.

Shri Koganti Sitharamacharyulu, Lecturer in Sanskrit College, Guntur, gave a resume of the exhibition and quoted in extenso verses from the "Ramayana" and 'Prabandhas' to show the affinity between divinity and art.

Smt. I. Prabhavathi Devi, Lecturer in Painting, Govt. Women's College, Guntur, spoke on traditional art while Shri C. S. N. Patnaik, Lecturer in Sculpture, dealt with modern art.

There was a Veena performance by Smt. R. Kuppu Rao and a vocal recital of "Bhaja Govindam" by Smt. Sudha Nagarajan.

The Secretary, Shri P. Venkateswara Rao, presented the report.

Shri P. Srinivasa Murthy, Jt. Secretary of the Kendra, extended a welcome to the visitors while Shri U. G. K. Sarma, Treasurer of the Kendra, rendered the prayer item at all the functions.

GUNTUR KENDRA:

Shri Joseph John Feted:

SHRI JOSEPH JOHN, Joint Director, Rajendra Prasad Institute of Communication Studies, visited the Guntur Kendra on January 25 and met the students of the various faculties and also the members of the staff and of the Kendra.

A farewell function was arranged in view of his approaching retirement. Shri P. N. V. Rao, Retired Director of Studies, Rajendra Prasad Institute of Communication Studies, Hyderabad, presided over the function. Shri P. Venkateswara Rao, Secretary and Shri P. Srinivasa Murthy, Joint Secretary, and others spoke eulogising the services of Shri Joseph John to the Institution and also to the Bhavan.

Shri P. N. V. Rao in his opening remarks appreciated the efficient work done by Shri Joseph John in conducting the studies in the Bhavan's Rajendra Prasad Institute of Communication Studies.

Shri John in the course of his reply said that Guntur Kendra was the first one to give him farewell and that he would remember it always.

HOECHST RESEARCH:

FROM a sand sample collected from a beach in India, a culture predominantly producing Neomycin B has been isolated in the Hoechst Research Centre. Work is in progress to develop this strain for industrial production of the antibiotic. Most of the present Indian requirement of Neomycin is imported.

The Hocchst Research Centre in Bombay has been set up in 1971. The Centre is one of the most advanced and sophisticated in the country. The Company's investment to date on Research and Development has been Rs. 5.5 crores, and its German technical collaborators have donated sophisticated equipment worth Rs. 25 lakhs.

The main objectives of the Research Centre are: Screening of soil and marine samples collected from different geographical regions of India for the isolation of micro-organisms

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producing either new antibiotics or known antibiotics with better yields and investigation of Indian medicinal plants to find therapeutically active substances. Efforts are made to isolate these active substances in a pure form to determine their structure and eventually to undertake their synthesis.

NEW HYPERTENSION DRUG:

A NEW drug for the treatment of hypertension which is claimed to work selectively on the heart without affecting bronchi and perpheral blood vessels while at the same time giving few side-effects has been developed by AB Hassle, Gothenburg, a subsidiary of Sweden's Astra pharmaceutical group.

High blood pressure is considered to be the most serious risk factor for the occurrence of cardiovascular diseases, including coronary heart attack, blood clots, and cerebral haemorrhage. It is calculated that 10-15 per cent of the population in the western industrialized world suffer from hypertension, and it is clearly on the increase.

Called Seloken—or in some countries Betaloc—the drug, whose generic name is metroprolol, is a new type of beta-blocker without intrinsic stimulating activity. Extensive tests in a number of countries have shown that it can be used as basic treatment in all forms of hypertension. It has also been documented as an effective drug in angina pectoris.

Pharmacokinetic studies—which serve to establish the effects of the body on a drug have been made extensively on both healthy subjects and patients. They show that absorption is rapid and that a maximal effect may be registered within one hour of administration. Excretion occurs via the kidneys.

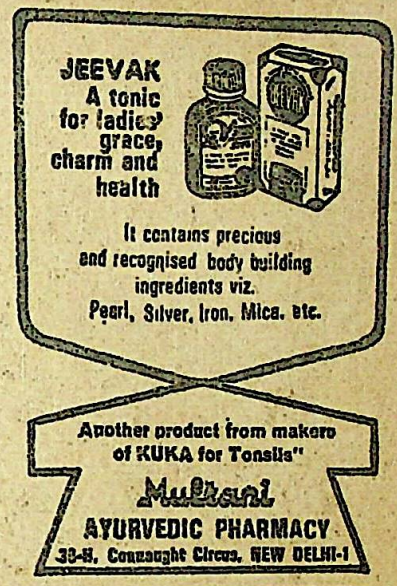
An important advantage of Seloken is that it can safely be given to hypertonic patients who have also asthma and obstructive lung diseases such as bronchitis. The treatment should, however, in such cases be combined with a beta 2-receptor-stimulating preparation. This has not been possible with earlier types of beta-blockers.

Combinable with other drugs:

IN studies on interaction with other drugs it has been shown that Seloken can be combined with other preparations which are often prescribed together with beta-blockers. These include digitalis, diuretics, and hydralazine.

One tablet morning and evening is generally sufficient, which is less than for rival preparations and reduces the risk of the patient neglecting or forgetting to take the medicine. AB Hassle says.

Behind the introduction of Seloken lie seven years of development work, according to 'Swedish Trade News.' □ □ □



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BOOK REVIEW

TYAGOPANISHAD by E. N. Purushothaman, published by Andhra Pradesh Sangeeta Nataka Akademi, Kala Bhavan, Saifabad, Hyderabad-500 004, pp. 376, Price: Rs. 20.

"SAINT TYAGARAJA'S name is a household word in South India and his musical compositions in Telugu occupy a pride of place in Carnatic music. Each one of his compositions is a masterpiece not only in music and poetry but also in philosophic content. Unless a person is well-versed in Telugu language, the Puranas and Vedanta, it will be difficult for him to fully appreciate the profundity of Shri Tyagaraja's compositions. While the music of Tyagaraja's compositions has universal appeal, their elevating and uplifting influence is lost on most people who do not understand their literary and philosophical significance. This is doubly true in the case of persons who are not fortunate enough to know the Telugu language. Herein lies the value of Shri Purushotham's commentaries on selected compositions of Shri Tyagaraja which are compiled in book form in this publication. Besides giving a free and easy translation in English of the Sahitya of each composition (below the Telugu version of the composition), the author has explained the Puranic allusions contained in them and the Vedantic meanings in simple and precise language.... This book which meets a long felt need will undoubtedly help all music lovers to appreciate more fully the compositions of Shri Tyagaraja," writes Shri V. Sundaresan, I.A.S., in his valuable introduction, which brings out all the salient features of the author's painstaking research work.

According to Indian tradition, music has descended from God, the Universal Being. Its appeal is therefore universal. Tyagaraja says in one of his compositions that the seven Swaras are born from the five faces of Lord Siva: "Sadhyajaa thaadhi Panchavathaja Sa, Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Varaspatha Swara". It is the entrancing essence of the sublime Sama Veda. "Modhakara Nigamoth-thma Sama vedasaaram." It is born from the lotus of the Kundalini and the realisation of it is the highest bliss. Even if we can discover the abodes of the splendorous "sapta swaras," we can attain heaven, says Tyagaraja. Thus, music and devotion are the two strands of the cord which connects Jeevatma and the Paramatma, says the author.

Quoting the views of Prof. P. Sambamoorthy, the author traces the growth of music in India and how it came to be divided into Hindustani music and Carnatic music. The music of Northern India came under the influence of Persian and Arabic music and developed a new style of its own. Untouched by any such alien influences, the music of Southern India developed on traditional lines and came to be called Carnatic music, deriving its name from the Karnataka land where it flourished.

According to the author, the Car-

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natic music as it is heard today was born and re-born in Thanjavur District, situated in the Cauvery delta of Tamil Nadu, known as the citadel of culture and fine arts which were patronised by the Chola kings. According to Prof. Sambamoorthy, more than four-fifths of Carnatic music was produced in this district which was the cradle of vocal and instrumental music, dance and dance-drama. All the three of the Musical Trinity—Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Shyama Sastry were born in this district. Tyagaraja was born in Thiruvaroor, where the presiding deity, Lord Siva, is known by the name of Tyagaraja. All the four great Nayanmars, Appar, Sundarar, Jnana Sambandar and Manikkavachagar (and not three, as stated by the author on page (xii) of the Preamble) have sung the praise of the deity at Thiruvaroor. Tyagaraja's father, Ramabrahman, migrated from Thiruvaroor to Thiruvaiyaru, the meeting place of five sacred rivers. Ramabrahman was well versed in Ramayana by virtue of which his son Tyagaraja became a great devotee of Rama. His father taught him Telugu and Sanskrit and initiated him into the scriptures. His mother, Seethamma, sang devotional songs for him and introduced him to Jayadeva, Purandaradasa and Ramadas. Tyagaraja learnt vocal music and veena under Sonti Venkataramanayya, a distinguished Asthana Vidwan in the Tanjore Court, which was then under Maratha rulers. Though a 'grahastha', Tyagaraja turned an ascetic, renounced all worldly things and lived by singing and doing "unchavritti" (i.e. going round by singing devotional songs in the streets and accepting rice or whatever one offers out of piety). Tyagaraja spurned all temporal honours and rewards. He lived as a poor mendicant all his life and as the true devotee of Lord Sri Rama alone.

Of the 4000 songs Tyagaraja is believed to have composed, only about 700 are now extant with notations and out of them only about 200 are in vogue. He has handled 47 melakartas and has rendered 211 ragas of which many were his own creations. As a born composer, he occupies the same place in Indian music as Beethoven occupies in Western music. Tyagaraja has divinised music. The songs are couched in simple diction, though impregnated with ultimate Truth, says Prof. Sambamoorthy. A master of melody, his songs are sweet like grape juice—'draksha paakam.'

In his commentaries on 125 'Kritis' of Tyagaraja, the learned author, himself a devout Bhakta and a Rasika par excellence, has well brought out the Puranic allusions, the Upanishadic truths, and the practical philosophy of the great saint-musician. Tyagaraja's intimate and facile description of the miseries of worldly life and his mode of appeal to the supreme Lord and Master are delightfully delineated by the author. The reading of the commenatry thrills and melts the heart of the reader, filling it with devotion to Tyagaraja's Ishta devata, Sri Rama. In an ecstatic mood, the author speaks of several 'Keerthanams' as among the best of Tyagaraja's creations. Space forbids dealing with the beauties of all such compositions. To quote a single instance, the author's commentary on the 'Kriti' in Karaharapriya-Roopakam, beginning with "Rama Nee Samaana Mevaru'" (pp. 269 to 275) is soul-stirring. The author says, "The entire devotional and musical weight of the keerthanam is balanced on the single phase in the opening line "Samaana Mevaru." It is the beauty spot and is charged with so much fervour. He further says that this is one of the best compositions in Karaharapriya, which has given birth to many delightful "janyaragams." Tyagaraja was the first to compose in

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this raga. According to Prof. Sambamoorthy, this is one of the Keerthanams in which the Pallavi itself gives abundant scope for developing 'Sangathis.' Tyagaraja is a master inventor of 'Sangathis.' He is the only composer who has attempted 'Sahitya bhavasangathis.'

Besides the commentaries referred to above, the author has appended five chapters at the end, "namely (1) Tyagaraja's portraits of Rama, (2) Sangeethamu Saaropyamu, (3) Sangeetha Saahitya Samyogamu, (4) Books referred and (5) Errata (pp. 349 to 376). The first three contain very valuable information about Tyagaraja's conception of the divinity of Sri Rama, both as God and as Man (Avatara Purusha), about the divinity of music which, when practised with deep and single-minded devotion, leads one to salvation ('Mukthi') and about the magic of words that make music. "Words have shape and substance, import and purport, measure and manner, mood and melody. In short, words have life. It is in the choice of words the magic of poetry lies," says the author. It is very true. Tyagaraja is unrivalled in the rare art of blending the "Raga bhava" with "Sahityabhava.'.

The profundity of the author's knowledge of the writings on the subject of music, art and literature by the well-known writers of India and abroad, and in particular the celebrated writers, critics and poets in English is amply illustrated by the several quotations the author has given in support of his views and comments. It is a spiritual and literary treat to read and enjoy the book from cover to cover.

A word about the title of the book namely, "Tyagopanishad." The author has expressed his indebtedness to his two disciples, Smt. Padmaja and Kumari Indira for fixing the title of this learned treatise (pp. xvi). It may be mentioned in this connection that there is another book, published in 1970 with the same title "Shri Tyagopanishad" written in Tamil by Harikatha Ratnakara T. S. Balakrishna Sastry, who has given a brief commentary with meaning on 69 "Keerthanas" of Tyagaraja.

Shri E. N. Purushothaman's "Tyagopanishad" is a far more detailed work. The Andhra Pradesh Sangeeta Nataka Akademi has rendered a notable service to the world of music by bringing out this book as their thirty-second publication. In short, it is a book which should not only adorn the table of every lover of music but should be studied, digested and merged with one's inner supreme self. It is sure to make man, a better man, nay, a godly man!

—S. Venguswamy

AKKA MAHADEVI — The Divine Cuckoo (English rendering of AKKA'S 50 Vachanas) by B. A. Patil. Published by Siddhavageesha Prakashana, Gulbarga, pages xi+50, Price: Rs. 5.

AKKA MAHADEVI is a celebrated woman saint of Karnataka. The 12th century in the literary and social history of Karnataka has the unique distinction of claiming many revolutionaries who through religious exhortation attempted to bring about a social change. AKKA (meaning elder sister)—a term of respect and affection) is one of the Sharanas (Shiva Bhaktas) who flourished in the 12th century. Her life reminds one of Bhakta Meera. She renounced the world at a very early age and chose to be a mendicant singer and devoted all her life to interpret Eternal Reality in terms of worldly reality. Her Vachanas (didactic verses in epigrammatic style) are full of mystic experiences, profound wisdom and philosophic insight. The style which is remarkably simple is at once grand. That which springs from the

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heart goes to the heart.

Of the 329 Vachanas composed by Akka, 50 have been rendered into English in this book by Shri B. A. Patil. It is noteworthy that this Lecturer in Science has a lively interest in things literary, and philosophic. His success as a poet in Kannada might have encouraged him to make this laudable attempt. The sincerity, zeal and devotion of Shri Patil are plain and evident. But a translator needs to possess a lot more equipment than mere zeal. Principal Sajjan is perfectly right when he says in his Foreword that Prof. Armando Menezes's translation of Akka's Vachanas "can never be surpassed".

Shri Patil's translated Vachanas are not all of equal merit. It is of course true that translating a mystic verse in Kannada into English has its difficulties and disadvantages. The verse entitled Divine Sport (Page 5) is done quite well.

He, for his own delight
Created this world entire,
And draped it with the lure of life
secular.

On the other hand, Life is a Lure (Page 14) is pedestrian. In a good number of verses it is the profundity of thought that imparts a measure of worth to the compositions. If only Shri Patil had employed rich and crisp expressions the verses would have read better.

The introduction written by the translator himself, describing the life of Akka and expounding her philosophy, makes a poor show. Mistakes of every conceivable kind—spelling, structure, and expression, (not to speak of stylistic faults)—are plainly noticeable and they tend to create a rather unsatisfactory impression of the translator's ability to use English.

The format and the get up are good and the printing is excellent.

—N. Nanjunda Sastry

THE RELEVANCE OF SRI AUROBINDO TODAY: A Souvenir Volume. Published by Sri Aurobindo Samiti, Sri Aurobindo Bhavan. 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Calcutta-16, price: Rs. 20.

THESE 12 refreshing essays in the volume under notice focus almost the entire spectrum of the multi-splendoured mind of Sri Aurobindo whom Romain Rolland hailed as "the complete synthesis that has been realised to this day of the spiritual genius of Asia". A major contribution to the vast growing Aurobindo literature both in India and abroad, this souvenir volume will be read with absorbing interest by those who want to understand the various strands of Sri Aurobindo's thought which lead to the unchartered world of Life Divine. The spirit and motive and method of this great book are admirable.

The founding of Sri Aurobindo Bhavan along with Sri Aurobindo Samiti on the occasion of the birth centenary of one of the greatest sons of Bengal has a special significance to the cultural life of Calcutta where he was born in 1872. The Bhavan has been established exactly at the same house where Sri Aurobindo first opened his eyes and spent his childhood. The place which enshrines his relics has now become a place of pilgrimage where thousands come to pay their homage to the great Rishi, and also to attend the weekly lectures on the life and philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

Recently, the Sri Aurobindo Samiti sponsored an All-India Conference on "The Relevance of Sri Aurobindo Today" which was participated by some leading scholars and writers, including such distinguished names as Prof. Sisirkumar Ghose, and Sarvashri Amiya Kumar Mazumdar, Viswanath Prasad Verma, S. N. Mahajan, Annada Sankar Ray, N. R. Subbannachar, Manoj Das and others. Each of the participants discussed

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from various angles the teachings as well as the comprehensive world-view of Sri Aurobindo and its universal relevance. The three-day conference, it may be noted here, presented three broad aspects of Sri Aurobindo's thought: (1) Man Making; (2) Nation Building and (3) The Unity of Mankind; and the 12 papers which were read covered in a very precise manner, and to some extent, with authority, almost the entire range of Sri Aurobindo's concepts on these three subjects, which have relevance to the contemporary society.

As the volume under notice is a product of a collaborative work by scholars of diverse disciplines, it is but natural that the 12 essays touch Sri Aurobindo's orchestral mind and enable the readers in a short-cut way to get a correct understanding of the social and spiritual thoughts of the greatest philosophical worker and religious teacher the world has ever seen. In his introductory address, Dr. D. P. Chattopadhyaya has aptly observed: "Sri Aurobindo's ideas are too lofty to be understood by the common man unless they are suitably explained by competent people." Those participating in the Conference are universally acknowledged as really competent to speak on Sri Aurobindo.

In short, this well-written and excellently produced volume will be read with delight by one and all. We congratulate the Secretary of Sri Aurobindo Bhavan on giving us such an exquisite treatise on the mind and face of Sri Aurobindo by many hands.

—Moni Bagchee

SANSKRIT

KAMADHENU — A course of Sanskrit in 40 days by E. P. Bharata Pisharoti, Bharata Vidyapitham, P. O. Eranellur, Trichur District, Kerala State, pages 402, Price: Rs. 25.00.

INDEPENDENT India, in her frantic efforts at modernisation, has not done well to neglect the study of Sanskrit language. The place given, during the British period, to Sanskrit in the scheme of general education has since been largely usurped by other subjects. The specialised institutions for the advanced study of Sanskrit have mostly been closed one after the other. The recommendations contained in the magnificent report of the Sanskrit Commission by and large remain on paper. The functioning so far of the Central Sanskrit Board has been sadly disappointing. No wonder there is rapid decline in Sanskrit scholarship all over the country.

The dark cloud, however, is not absolutely bereft of its proverbial silver lining. An enlightened minority of Indians have already begun to feel acutely the cultural, moral and spiritual debilitation of our society consequent upon the blocking of the arteries that connect it with the treasure-house of the wisdom of India accumulated through ages. Efforts at popular level for the propagation of non-formal and non-institutional education in Sanskrit bear ample testimony to the above fact. The objective here is to give a second chance to those adults that did not have or could not utilise the opportunity of acquainting themselves with Sanskrit during their school days.

The work under review is a course in Sanskrit through the medium of English divided into 40 lessons originally intended to be covered in 40 instructional days. The traditional method of learning Sanskrit prevalent in Kerala started with a study by heart of the various declensions and conjugations and then proceeded to the works of poets like Kalidasa. Though effective, this method is time-consuming, and the initial learning by rote is most repugnant to the modern adult students. The method now prevailing in schools, which mostly

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eschews the learning of declensions and conjugations, fails miserably to produce the desired effect. The present work adopts a via media combining the advantages of both these methods. The most essential topics of grammar are covered in the first 12 lessons. A portion from Kalidasa's **Raghuvamsa** is introduced as detailed text from the 13th lesson onwards, and the medium of instruction is progressively changed from English into Sanskrit. Gradually portions from **Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanishads** and **Rigveda** are introduced. All the lessons have graded exercises and passages for translation, emphasising and highlighting structural peculiarities of Sanskrit.

These lessons have been tried in actual classroom conditions at several places and it has been established that, administered in the proper way, they are capable of making earnest students proficient in Sanskrit in a very short period. Now the author has produced a correspondence course based on this work in which each lesson is covered in a period of 15 days, the entire course taking 20 months to complete. This correspondence course, too, has been tested and found effective and is now being administered on a very wide scale.

The mode of approach to each topic of grammar adopted in the book conveys some sort of peculiarity which raises up an incessant curiosity in the readers by interesting and lucid discussions based on the linguistic dogmas and touching examples from their life. The comparative method adopted in the book removes the inborn dryness and rigidness of Sanskrit grammar. Discussions create a feeling in readers that they are actually attending lectures in their classrooms. The attempt made to bring out the versions of the book as well as the Correspondence Course in various regional languages of the country within this short period is a sign of wholehearted welcome of the Paddhati.

The author, Shri Bharata Pisharoti has dedicated his life and whatever resources he could command for the popularisation of the Sanskrit language, which alone, he firmly believes, will guarantee the political unity and spiritual well-being of India. His enthusiasm for Sanskrit is infectious.

I have great pleasure to commend this very useful work as well as the Correspondence Course of Sanskrit based on it to all those who want to get in the shortest time possible an adequate knowledge of Sanskrit enabling them to enjoy the literary treasures embodied in that classical language, which perhaps, is the greatest heritage we have obtained from our ancestors.

—N. V. Krishna Warrier

□ □ □

Let everyone understand that real love of God does not consist in tear-shedding, nor in that sweetness and tenderness for which usually we long, just because they console us, but in serving God in justice, fortitude of soul and humility.

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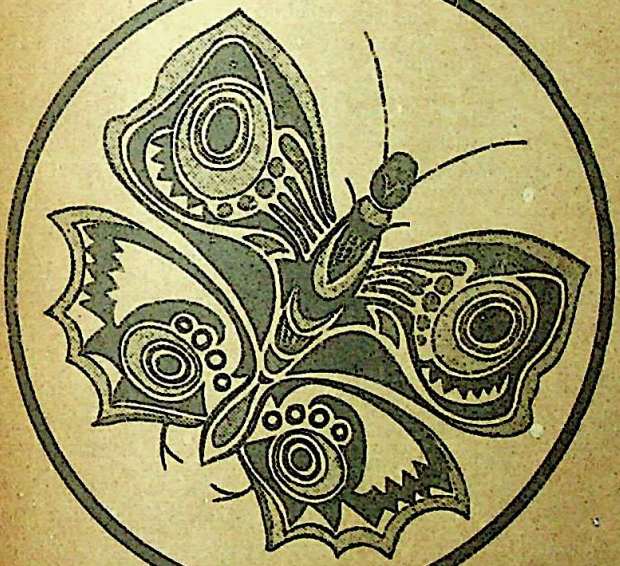

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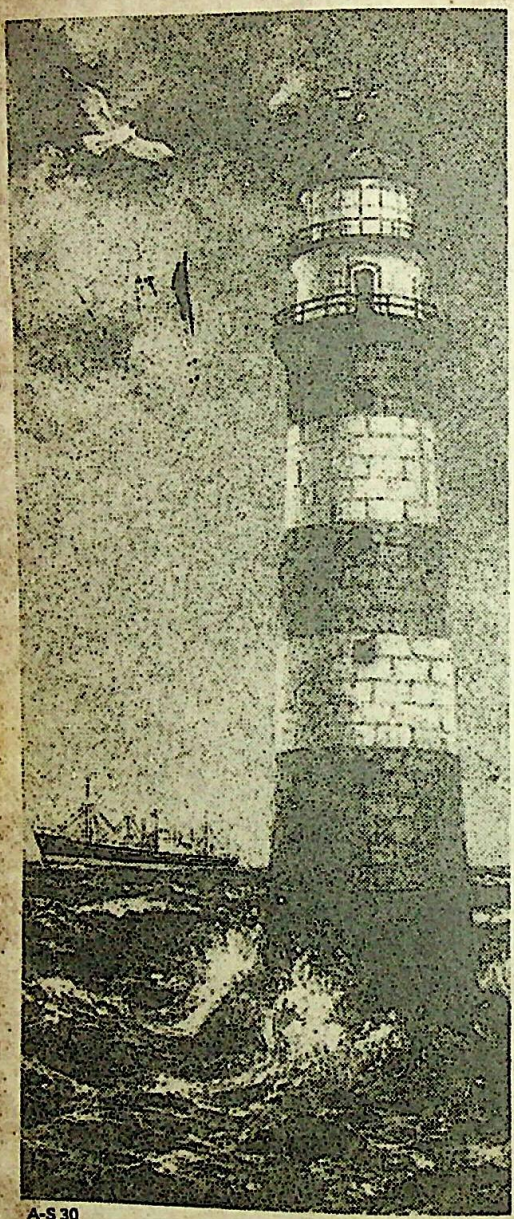

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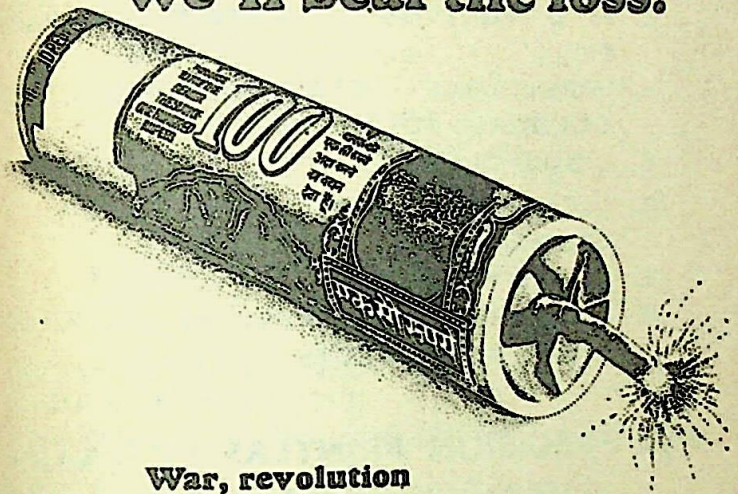

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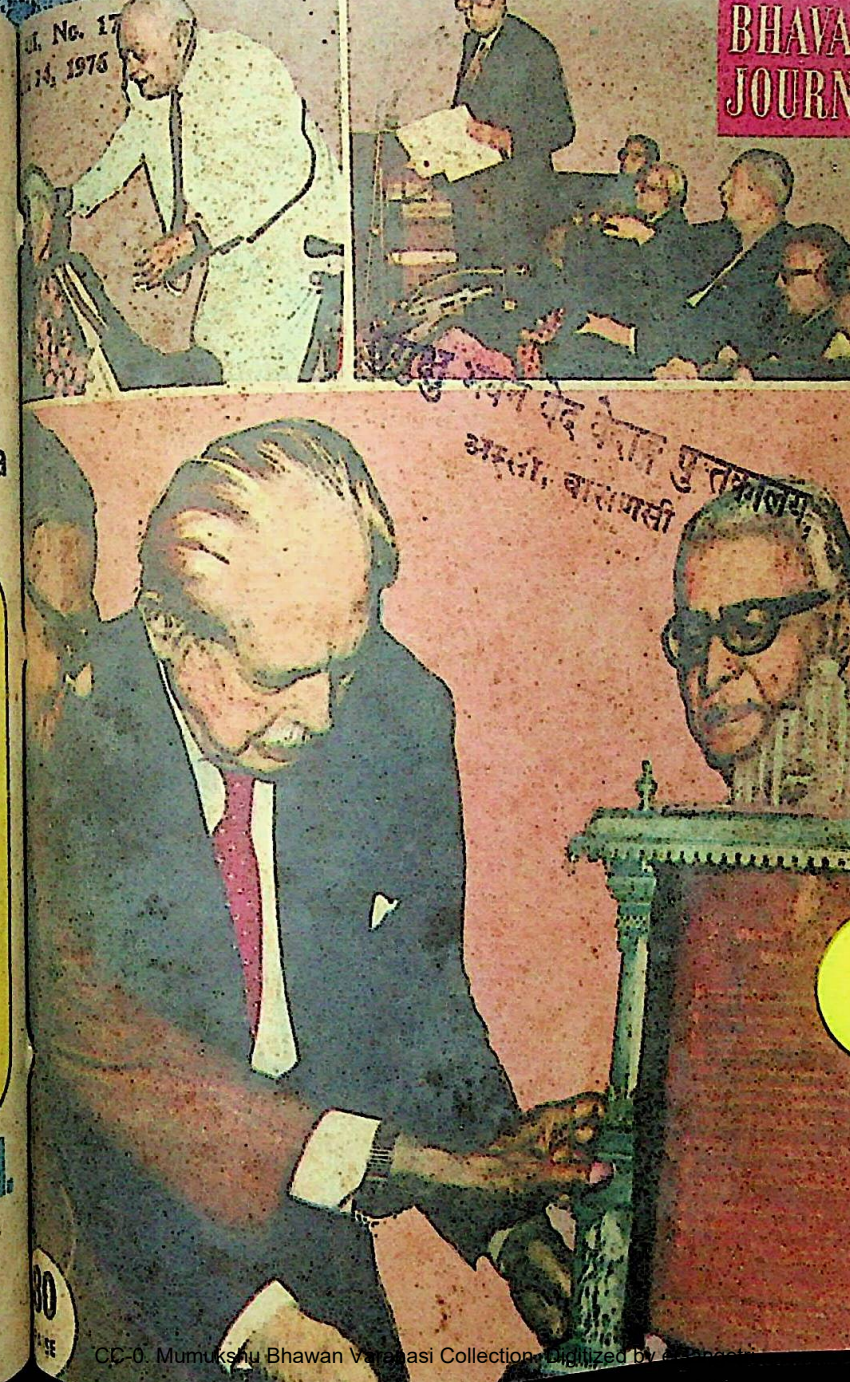

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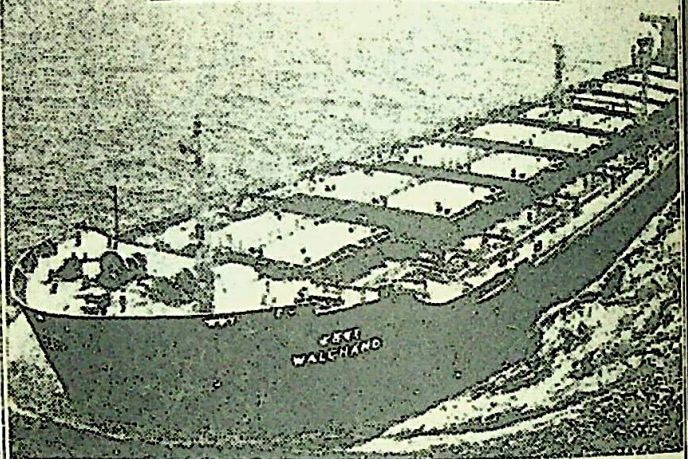

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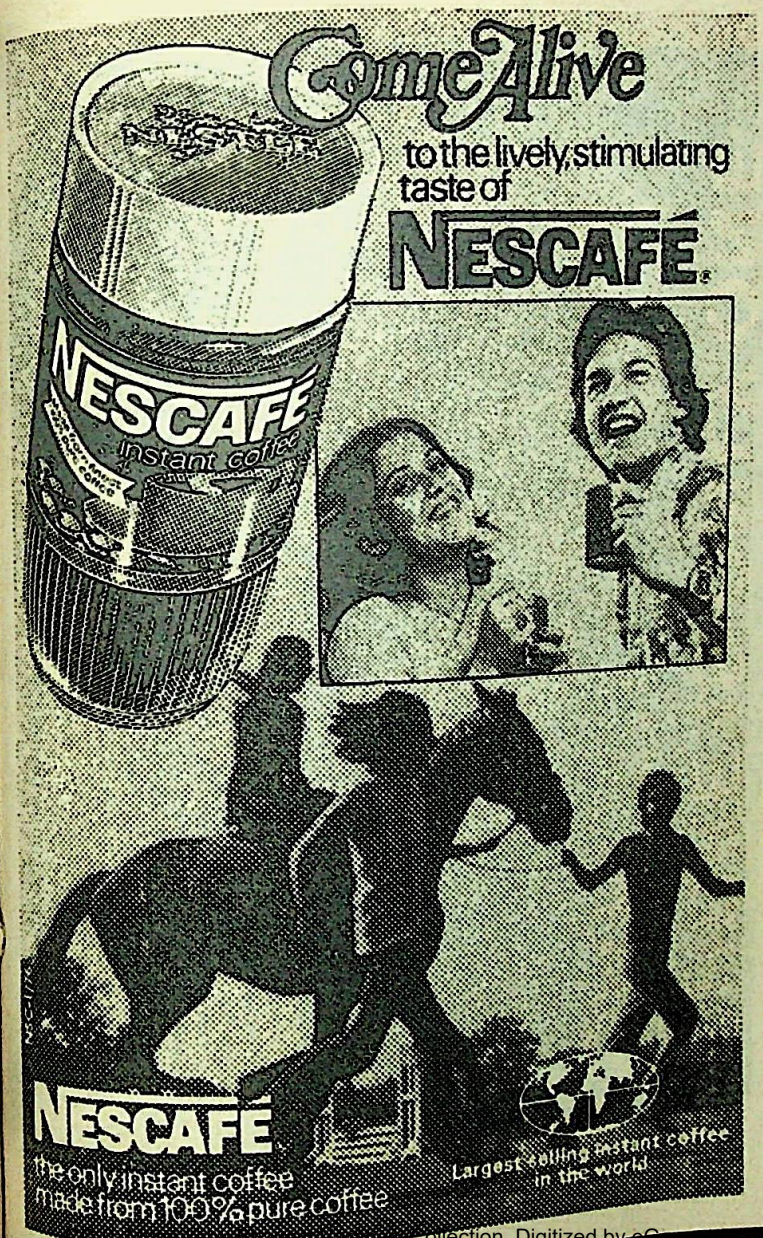

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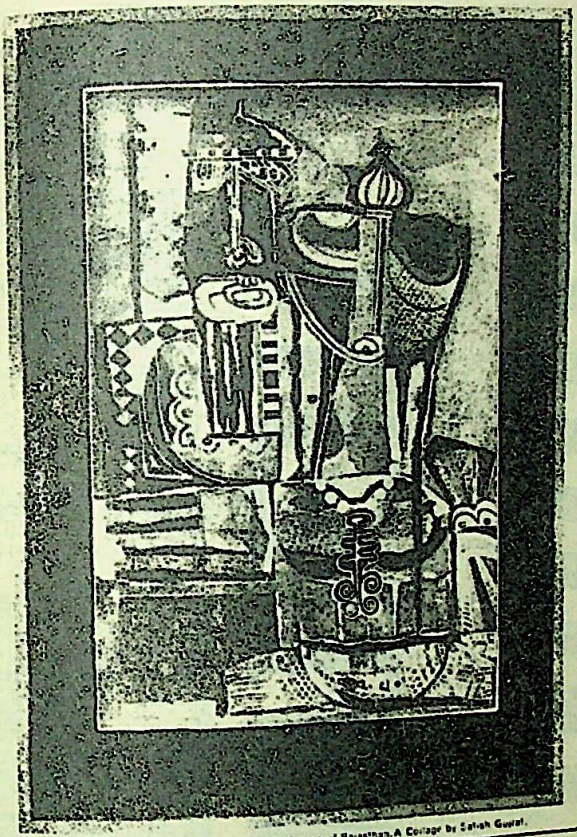

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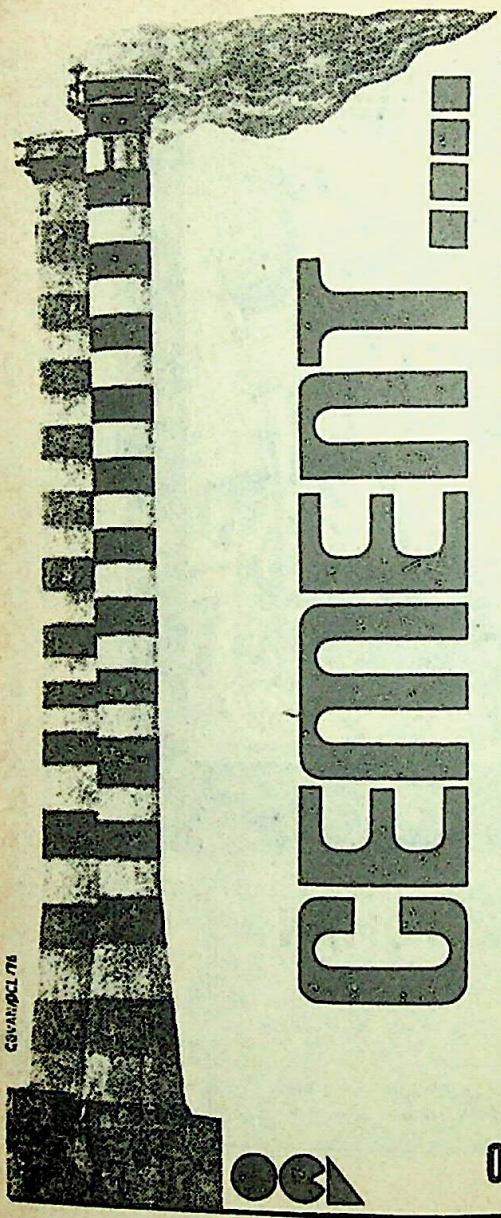

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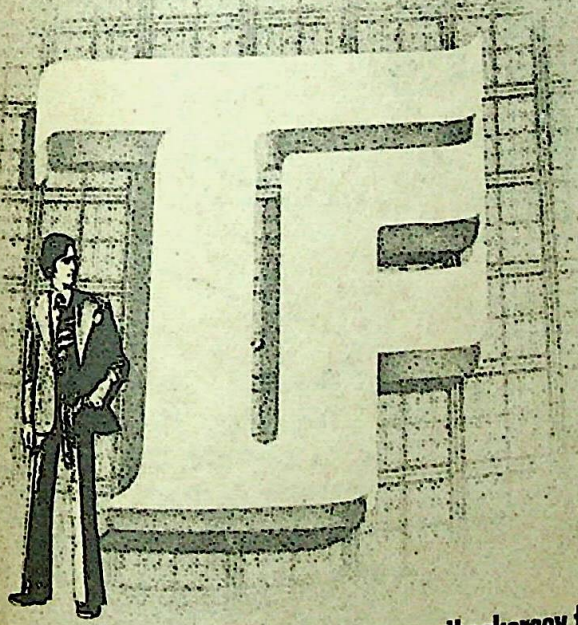

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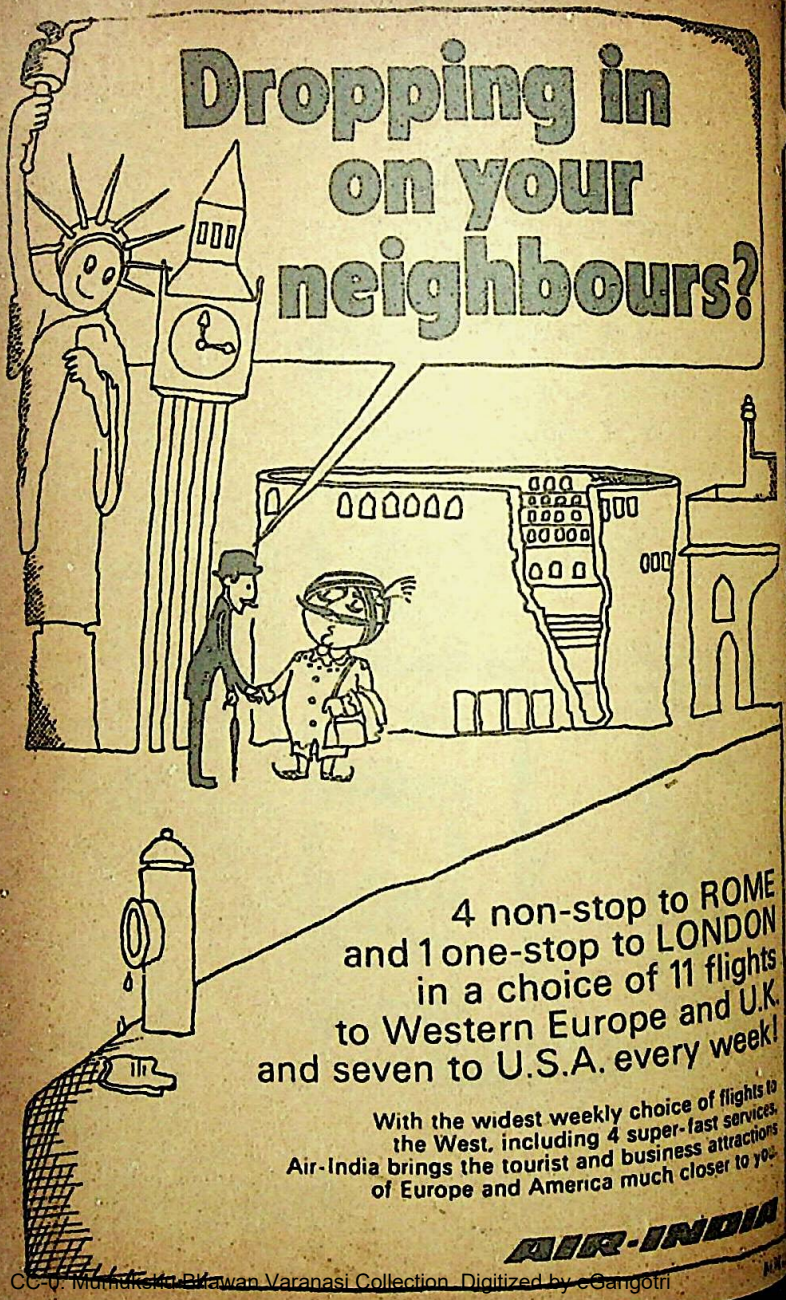

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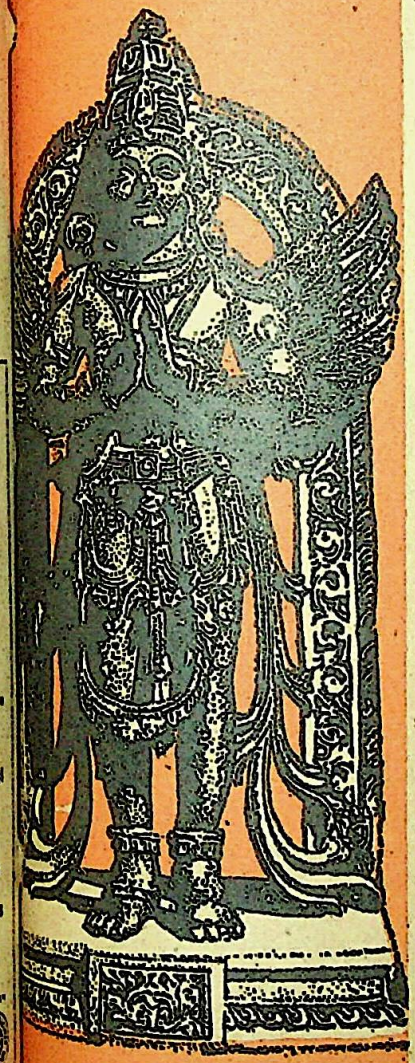
आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।
Let noble thoughts come to us from every side
Rigveda I-89-i



BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

PRAYER FOR FEARLESSNESS

अभयं मित्राद् अभयं अमित्राद्
अभयं ज्ञाताद् अभयं पुरो यः ।
अभयं नक्तम् अभयं दिवा नः
सर्वा आशा मम मित्रं भवन्तु ॥

May I be fearless of the friend, fearless of the foe;
Fearless of the known, fearless of the unknown;
May our nights be without fear, our days without fear
May all the directions be my friends.

(A. 19.15-6)

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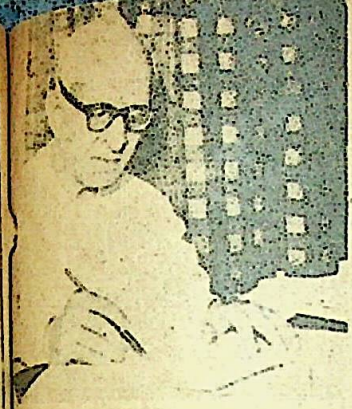

Kulapati Vani

Need for Discipline

ISSUES are being so confused by the political atmosphere of the day that discipline is often supposed to be synonymous with tyranny or harshness.

In fact, discipline is another name for order and harmony, for self-control and character; that is, for happiness, well-being and a sense of responsibility.

We are often told that our young men lack discipline because they are frustrated, and the frustration will continue till all economic causes are eradicated—to the satisfaction of all economists!

The logic is that indiscipline must continue unless all the economic disorders are relieved. Few seem to consider that the economic causes will never be removed so long as young men remain frustrated. The argument is absurd.

Self-restrained behaviour is the outcome of moral and spiritual training. If it can be maintained only amidst economic plenty—and not otherwise—it is anything but discipline.

And by the logic, virtue should be maintained only when there is no possibility of falling from it; if the temptations remain, loss of virtue must be accepted as inevitable.

□ □ □

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Selections from Saint Ramalinga's Golden Book of Grace

II

Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar

12

O Gloried dancer on the cosmic stage
my soul's home and quintessence!
You revealed to me, as the curtain rose,
all the transcendental Truth;
Sheer God-knowledge ripened in my nonage
and charged my life with delight. (4133)

13

Once when as a boy I slept all alone
on a pial, and slipped down,
Wasn't it you that held me up in your arms
and then gently laid me down?. (4134)

14

O my sweet Lord, deign to wear this garland
of my memoried numbers:
Under the greenwood tree, as refuge from
the oppressive summer heat;
Shade and o'erhanging fruit, and gurgling brook,
and fragrant floating flowers;
The welcome gentle breeze on the plateau,
and the bliss of the moment:
That Chitrai full-moon of our wedding hour,
my dancer-king of Thillai! (4091)

15

I was in remorse once when a woman
forced me into union:
But magnanimous Lord! You consoled me

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"Do not fear! all's our doing!"
Then You made me espy twin Mothers dance,
and my flawed nature was cured.

(4136)

16

Rare gem that dispels the mists of Maaya,
giver of all light and life!
Once as I lay asleep on a pial,
a boy wearied and hungry,
You brought me a plate of the choicest food
and fed me so graciously!

(4137)

17

Sambanda! immortal Shiva-Guru!
refuge of the devotees!
In the days of my green and callow youth
when I had no light within,
And I lacked the steady light of Knowledge
and strength of experience,
You led me up the narrow path of Grace,
with no slipping afterwards.

(3226)

18

Although I lacked the sense of right and wrong
in my early days, even then
You were one with me, and hence I had
a sheer distaste for eating.
And now, while I continue immature,
I desire your Grace alone:
Aside from that nectar, I have no likes,
no likes whatsoever.

(3393)

19

My Father, I am no slave of money,
I've cast it in wells and ponds;
But such wealth that had come from You alone,
I gave it to the needy.
Is there reason to say anything more?
Your Grace is with me always.

(3396)

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20

You know, O Lord, of my thorough distaste
for this my fleshy body:
I live in it, yet strongly dislike it,
and I've fasted to waste it.
But O! the sordid sight of flesh-eaters:
it casts me down in a swoon.

(3450)

21

Great dancer at Thillai, this you told me,
and this you laid upon me:
"They are not our kith and kin—these killers
and meat-eaters—but outcastes;
Feed them they're hungry, don't befriend them
till they take to the true Path."

(4160)

22

When all willingly I made surrender
of life, body, belongings:
In delighted acceptance and exchange
you poured all of You entire—
All Your life, body and forms infinite—
and forged blissful union.
O light abounding! O life of my life!
O bliss of communion!
O gem of purest glint serene! O my
nectarean medicine!
O my dancer-king in jewelled hall,
wear my truth and falsehood both.

(4149)

23

A deceitful and hypocritical cur
I may be, O Grace supreme!
Yet seeing me worship your lotus-feet
with my tender frame and heart,
Why have You not cast the least pity
on me, O my father divine!

(2644)

The numbers within brackets indicate the numbering of the original Tamil hymns as in Ooran Adigal's definitive two-volume edition of *Tiru-Arutpa*, published in 1972.

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Chiranjeevi Vibhishana

AN IMAGINARY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

K. Sreenivasan

CHAPTER ONE

3

All this was a revelation to me, a rude shock. It made me look into my own heart and search for feelings that I had never suspected I had before. It was understandable that the Rakshasas did not like my going over to the other side on the eve of the commencement of the war. They loved and glorified their King Ravana and had shared in all his exploits. He was their hero. But I never for a moment suspected that I would be considered a traitor who went over to the enemy in order to gain his brother's kingdom.

The King himself accused me of such unworthy motives on the day of our parting, but that was done in a moment of passion. My second brother, the brave Kumbhakarna, acknowledged the righteousness of my decision was a though he himself followed his King to death on the battle-field.

Everyone in Lanka knew that I did not follow the Rakshasa code of behaviour, that I disagreed with Ravana in his oppression of holy men, that I pleaded with him to make peace with Sri Rama before it was too late, and only when everything else failed and he literally kicked me out of his court did I leave him.

At least, I thought everyone knew it and in my innocence, I had assumed that none would question my motives or my integrity, however much they might disagree with my decision. To one who had spent a lifetime of blameless virtue, this was a great shock. If one Rakshasa said I traitor, it was obvious

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others thought so too, though as one of them in the group remarked, they were afraid to say so. I also felt that the gloom and the sorrow that surrounded my coronation was not only because of the defeat and the humiliation and the loss of Rakshasa power, but because they thought that a traitor was succeeding their king to the throne of Lanka.

If this was what my own kith and kin felt, what of those whom I had joined? Did they too think I was a traitor and merely made use of me to serve their own ends? True, Sri Rama called me his brother and trusted me implicitly. The Vanara chieftains respected and honoured me. But was that respect and honour shown to me because I had followed my conscience and the path of virtue or because I was an invaluable means of their victory?

The city was silent. There were no nocturnal noises to disturb the serenity of the night. The Vanaras, after having had their fill of pleasures, had gone to sleep. The Rakshasas too had gone, to nurse their grief and their humiliation as best as they could. Perhaps, they too had found forgetfulness in their sleep.

As I walked back to my palace in the loneliness of the night, I realised gradually, there were really no answers to these questions. Future generations, who read the story of Sri Rama and his epic struggle with Ravana to establish righteousness on earth will always be left with a doubt in their minds as to whether I was a selfish, scheming traitor who helped in the downfall of his brother in order to gain a kingdom, or a virtuous man who chose the path of righteousness in preference to his own near and dear ones whom he loved. I realised that future poets will sing the praises of Sri Rama and his brothers, will even pay tribute to the glory and valour of Ravana, but will be mixed in their reactions towards me.

But irrespective of what the future generations might say and think, it is necessary that I must turn inwards, look into my own heart and see where—if anywhere —I had gone wrong. This is necessary for my own peace of mind, for I have to live with my conscience, not for a decade or two, but for ever. I am one of those unfortunate beings who had been blessed with the gift of everlasting life by Brahma. Sri Rama too has conferred on me this kingdom so long as his name shall shine on this earth. It means, I will have to bear the burden of my conscience for ever and ever. So, you can see how important it is for me to live at peace with myself.

Countless generations will read the story of Sri Rama. When they do so, it is inevitable that they should compare the behaviour of his brothers with those of Ravana—particularly with my own behaviour. Will I be justified

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Top Rt.: Shri G. D. Birla, Hon. Member of the Bhavan, reading the Citation conferring the Hon. Membership on the Rt. Hon. Mr. Harold Macmillan. Seated (L. to R.): Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, Vice-President of the Bhavan, Shri M. C. Chagla, former Chief Justice of Bombay, Rt. Hon. Mr. Macmillan, Justice Shri M. Hidayatullah, former Chief Justice of India, who presided, and Shri Dharamsey M. Khatau, President of the Bhavan.

Bottom: Mr. Macmillan being presented the Tamra Patra in token of the conferment of the Hon. Membership of the Bhavan by Justice Shri M. Hidayatullah on his right and Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi on his left.

in their eyes? Or will I be dismissed as being too unimportant? Or as being too weak or too selfish? But one thing is certain; no one will write my story in all its pathos and in all its tragedy. If some one did, he might say, 'Here was a man whose intentions were most honourable and whose actions were most suspect.'

However, since no one is likely to write my story, I must record it myself, for what it is worth. I will neither try to justify myself nor condemn myself. I will merely relate it as I have lived it and as I have felt it, and let the future be my judge.

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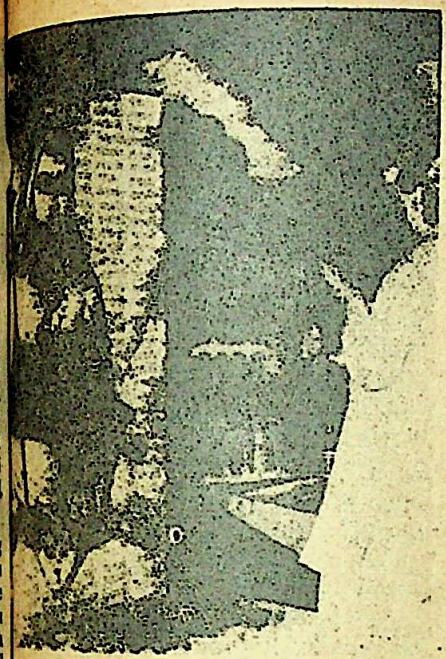

12

Vaakya Vritti

of Adi Sankaracharya

SWAMI
CHINMAYANANDA

एवमिन्द्रियदृग् नाहं इन्द्रियाणीति निश्चिनु।
मनोबुद्धिस्तथा प्राणो नाहमित्यवधारय ॥

Evam - Indriya - Drik - Na - Aham - Indriyaani - Iti Nischinu

Mano-Buddhis-Thathaa - Praano Na-Aham - Iti - Avadhaaraya

"SIMILARLY, be sure in yourself that you, the 'seer' of the senses, are not the senses themselves. And, ascertain that you are neither the mind, nor the intellect, nor the vital-force (*Prana*).

After explaining to the student that he is not the gross-body, here in the verse he is made to understand that he cannot be his subtle-body also. The sense faculties, *Prana*, mind and intellect together constitute the inner instrument without which the outer gross sense-organs and body cannot purposefully function. These subtle factors that drive the grosser equipment are called the subtle-body.

This subtle-body also is made up of the subtle aspects of the five great elements and as such it is also 'matter' (*Anatma*), and not the Self (*Atma*). Again, that we have *Prana*, mind, intellect etc. is constantly *known* by us. The 'knower' can never be the *known*.

We can 'see' the condition of our *Prana*, the nature of our mind, the states of our intellect, etc. at any given moment of observation. He who *sees* the subtle-body and becomes conscious of its changing moods and qualities of performances, must necessarily be someone distinctly other than the subtle-body.

The advice to the Vedantic student is that he, by independent analysis and careful arguments, must develop the firm conviction that he is the 'seer' of the subtle-body and as such something distinctly different from it. The

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'seer' can never be the *seen*.

"Ascertain that I am the lord of the sense-organs, *Pranas*, mind and intellect. No doubt, I take work from them. But I am not the subtle-body, I am the *knower* of the nature and functions of the various limbs of my subtle-body."

The subtle-body, like the sense-organs and the limbs of the gross-body, is a bundle of instruments, a tool-kit. The workman accomplishes his job *with* his instruments; no job is ever done *by* the tools themselves.

"Similarly, the sense-organs, mind and intellect are all my outer and inner tools (*Karana*). And I, who wield them, in shaping the experiences of my life, can be but something other than the tools."

Only when the mind is available can the sense-organs function. That our mind is receiving the sense-stimuli is *known* by the discriminative intellect in us. The intellect's judgements and responses are again *known* by me. Thus, I who am the *knower* of the intellect must be something other than the intellect and all its multiple tools. Breathing in and out is one of the manifestations of the *Prana*. This vital-force expresses in us as the different physiological functions. This is a product of the dynamic aspect (*Rajoguna*) inherent in all the five great-elements. The *Prana* by itself is also, therefore, nothing but 'matter' (*Anatma*) and not the Self (*Atma*).

The teacher advises that the student should thus ascertain clearly in himself that he is essentially something other than the 'gross' and the 'subtle' bodies.

If the gross-body and subtle-body do not independently serve as the self, the gross-subtle-complex may become the Self? The teacher says: □□□

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Significance of Rudra Parayanam

K. S. VENKATASUBRAMANIAM

2

THE *Rudrapurascharana vidhi* as enunciated in Kamalakara Bhatta's *Santi Kamalakara* describes the methods of reciting the Rudra Mahamantra with its six *angas*. They are three-fold: (i) Rudra Rudri, (ii) Maha Rudra, and (iii) Ati Rudra. (*Rudroduri maharudro trishatheethi, chatra Namakam Chamakatmakam ubhayarupam*). After reciting the 11 Anuvakas of *Rudradhyaya*, the Chamaka portion has to be chanted. This will complete one Avarta or reading of Rudra—i.e., one laghu (light) Rudra Rudri (*Namaste rudragna Vishnu ityadhyaya dvaye na ca, avartanamiti proktam*). Repetition of the Namaka and Chamaka Adhyayas eleven times will render the Rudraikadasini complete. Eleven Rudraikadasinis will make up one Maha Rudra. If eleven Maha Rudras are conducted, the ritual styled Ati Rudra will be completed.

Hemadri, Kausika and Bodhayana, while speaking of Rudraikadasini, say that the five mantras (*Sadyadi panchavaktra*) and the eleven Anuvakas of Rudra, together with the Chamaka portion, have to be recited and 11 such readings will complete the Rudraikadasini. The repetition of these hymns will result in the acquisition of all comforts desired by the devotee. The sins will automatically be removed. The ritual will bestow peace (*Sarva santi pradayini*).

Kanva and Katyayana hold the opinion that the rites connected with Rudra, Maha Rudra and Ati Rudra have to be observed in accordance with the appropriateness of the occasion (*Karyasya gairavath*).

Rudrapurascharana according to the commentators Ravana, Bhatta Bhaskara, Vidyaranya and Hemadri will include Japa, Homa and Abhisekha. One who reads the *Satarudriya* will be rendered as pure and sacred as the fire. (*Yah Satarudriyamadhiti so'gni pooto bhavati.*) According to

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Hemadri and the *Kalikapurana*, one who recites the Rudra Maha-mantra and meditates on Rudra will obtain for himself the highest position. He will not only absolve himself of all sins, but also beget all siddhis (*Vasikarana*). Two forms of Rudra are enunciated viz., (a) ritualistic (*homanga*), and (b) meditative. The *Kalika-purana* gives the following table:

(a) ten percent of the recitals have to be offered in the form of *Homa;*

(b) ten percent of the number of oblations given in *Homa* have to be offered in the shape of *Tarpana;*

(c) ten percent of the number offered in *Tarpana* should be given in the shape of *Marjana;*

(d) feeding has to be arranged, the number of persons to be fed being fixed at ten per-cent of the number of *Mar-jana* conducted.

The *Vayu Purana* gives in detail the merits attached to the conduct of Rudrapurascharana:

Rogavan papavanschaiva rudram
japto jitendriyah.
Rogat papat pramukto so vatula
sukhamasnute.

One who with control of the indriyas conducts Rudra Japa ob-tains liberation from the attacks of diseases ad gets exoneration from the evil influences of sin. He will beget immeasurable happiness. There cannot be any form of meditation that could equal Rudra (*Japa, Dhyana, Hutam, Tapah*).

Anapatyadi doseshu shakinyesh
graheshu cha,
Sarvajvara vinasaya Rudrajapa
vinischitah.

Rudra Japa will extricate one from the clutches of satellites and help defeat all opponents. All flaws or defects connected with heredity or progeny will be re-moved.

Apastambha lays down that the devotee has to offer his prayers before the Sun, and after conduct-ing worship in accordance with the prescribed mode should per-form the Rudra homa with offer-ings in the form of *bilwa* and *ghrita* to complete the Puracha-rana vidhi. Bodhayana says that the person who conducts this ritual will have a rebirth (i.e., he will acquire Samskaras) and that he will himself be a Rudra (i.e., one with Rudra by the acquisition of Jnana Tejas). Besides he will achieve all his desires. Bodha-yana further states:

Kaminam sarva kamarthaw
akamanam cha muktaye
Akamah sarvakamova japedya
Satarudriyam.

"For those who are in quest of achievements (desires) and for those who conduct worship with-out any end in view (*akami*) the recital of Satarudriya is essential. The person who wants mundane things will surely reach his target. The person who has no cravings will certainly obtain for himself liberation (*mukti*)."

If Palasa twigs (Muttuga) are offered in Homa, the attainments

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will consist of: (a) destruction of sin (*Papakshaya*),) (b) destruction of enemies (*Abhichara*) and (c) Recovery from diseases (*Vyadhivimochana*).

Bodhayana states that worship of Rudra could be conducted in the following forms:

(i) Conduct of 99 Rudraikadasinis,

(ii) Nine-hundred ninety-nine recitals of Rudra,

(iii) Three times the number fixed for Maha Rudra and Ati Rudra (3,997).

The conduct of Rudraikadasini, Maha Rudra and Ati Rudra will result not only in the security of cattle, elephants, horses etc., and the timely showering of rains, but also in the appeasement of malefic planets (Homa with Ghee and Til).

Evam trigunita karya maharudrati rudriyah
Vrstikamena vayojyahastyaschamaya santaye
Udbhavetyadbhutanam cha grhanantu viparyaye
Grhagramadi santyai cha tilaschajyena samyutah

Says the *Iswara Gita*: "The constant study of the prayers contained in the Upanishads, the chanting of the hymns of the Satarudriya, or meditation on the Pranava will undoubtedly purify the sattwas: this practice is considered as the correct mode of study."

Vedanta Satarudriya pranavadi japan budhah
Sattwasuddhikaram pumsam swadhyayam parichaksati.

In *Meru Tantra*, the efficacy of the *Rudradhyaya* is discussed at full length as follows: "One should conduct Abhisekha to Lord Rudra in accordance with the prescribed mode (*vidhi*) by reciting the two hymns (*Namaste Rudra* and *Agna Vishnu*). By one Avarta will accrue the merit attached to a bath in the sacred Ganges. By each Avarta, the devotee will be constantly releasing himself from the taints of sin. By conducting the Sandhya oblations (evening prayers) one will be freed from the sins of previous births. The conduct of the Abhisekha with the two hymns styled Rudri will certainly remove the stains of sin. One who conducts Lingarchana and Abhisekha with the *Rudradhyaya* constantly will destroy all the sins accrued during several births within the middle of the year. By immersing the Linga with 11 Laghu Rudra readings, one will never see the Sun i.e., gets freed from the cycle of birth and death. The conduct of 11 Rudraikadasinis will render the ritual into Maha Rudra. An impecunious person will eventually become a millionaire and get released from the fetters of sin. A Homa conducted properly will confer such boons as would be forthcoming by one Soma Yaga. Eleven Maha Rudras will equal one Ati Rudra and these rites will ward off all sin and suffering."

Says Bodhayana in one of his Sutras as follows: "One who aspires for release from sin and

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suffering in the shape of disease, attainment of wealth, peace, nourishment, satiation (contentment), longevity and health should certainly conduct these rites. Having observed them he will certainly attain the Siddhis."

Papakshayarthi vyadhivimochanarthi Srikamah
Santikamah pusthikamah ayushyakamah arogyakamah
Evamkuryat evamkurvan siddhimavapnoti.

A Homa conducted with white flowers in conclusion of the recitals (Rudraikadasini, Laghu Rudra, Maha Rudra and Ati Rudra) will obtain for the devotee mastery (*Eesatva*) over the world. No body can attempt to check or lay hands on the person who has attained such Siddhi. If the devotee conducts Archana of Siva before the Sun, immersing himself in water up to the level of the navel, he will be bold enough to subjugate even the Rudras. At this juncture, Lord Siva will himself be pleased to give audience to such devotee and confer his blessings on him.

The *Kalika Purana* says:

"If the Vedas are chanted once, the chanter is blessed that very same day; but if Rudraikadasini is conducted, the devotee will be rendered holy the very same minute."

Vedamekagunam japtva tadannaiva visudhyati,
Rudraikadasinim japtva tatkshanadeva sudhyati.

"Of all the Vidyas, the Srutis (Vedas) are the foremost and best; of all prayers contained in the Srutis, the Rudraikadasini is the most predominant." This is in fact a revelation from Siva himself.

Vidyasu Srutirukrsta rudraikadasini srutau,
Vedasya samamnatam sata-rudriyamuttamam,
Imani rahasyani.

In *Suta Samhita*, it is stated as follows:

"By virtue of the feeding done through the roots of the tree, the branches will begin to bear blossoms and fruit; similarly if Rudra japa (which is most pleasing to Lord Siva) is conducted, all the gods will be satiated. Hence by the conduct of the Rudra Japa only, the aspirant will not only get his mundane requests fulfilled, but also obtain liberation."

Vrikshasyamulasekena sakah pushyantivaiyatha,
Sivarudrajapat prite prite evasya devatah,
Ato Rudrajapadeva bhukti mukti prasidatah.

"At the time of casting off one's life, the recital of the Rudra will render it easy for the aspirant to cross the Samsara (release from the fetters) and thus attain Brahma (The First Principle). He will attain immortality and at the same time get liberated." (*Jabala Upanishad*).

Pranesutkramamaneshu rudrastarakam brahmaivachaste
Evasyamrtibhutva moksibhavati.

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According to *Siva Purana*, "the *Rudradhyaya* is the quintessence of all *Upanishads*. Those who wish to enjoy life can attain all their desires; the person who is in quest of liberation and the penitent ones will achieve their ends."

Sarvopanishadam sarorudradhyayah samarthitah,
Bhogarthino mumukshorva prayascittarthino 'pi va,
Rudropanishadam muktva gatiryanya na vidyate.

The very same idea is conveyed in another statement in *Suta Samhita* which is quoted below:

Yah pumanshatarudriyahpathati sraddhayasah,
Dine dine mahavishnu maranad urdhvamaisvaram,
Jnanamlabdhva sa vijnanadeva yeti paramgatim,
Grhastaischa vanastaischa tathaiva brahmacharibhih.

From the following quotation from *Visweswara Smriti*, it will be clear that even the Sannyasi who is expected to do the Pranava Japa has to recite the Rudra Japa. (*Sri Rudram pranavam chaivo nityamavartayedyadih.*)

The *Kaivalya Upanishad* further emphasises that the Atyasrami should meditate on Rudra once or always. (*Sarvada sakrdva japet*).

The *Linga Purana* maintains that Arjuna earnestly prayed and sought for the Pasupata from Mahadeva. He gave one crore recitals of the *Rudradhyaya* for attainment of the Siddhi.

From an examination of all the points connected with the conduct of the rituals etc., it would be seen that happiness can be attained by the Sadhaka who meditates with perseverance and possesses a knowledge of the significance underlying the Mantras. He will be a true Jnanin and will get freed from all sins.

Yo 'rthajna itisakalam bhadramasnute nakameneti vidhuta papma.

The *Chhandogya Upanishad* emphasises that "whatever is conducted with true knowledge will be more efficacious." (*Ya deva vidyayakaroti tadeva viryavattaram bhavati.*)

Madhusudana Saraswati while discussing the aspects of Karma and Jnana in his *Prasthana Bheda* observes thus: "The sages, having known all, are in no way misled by illusion. The discrimination of the different types or forms of Upasana is only intended for those who are beginners. With a view to exercising a check against any diversion towards scepticism and agnosticism, these different forms of worship are prescribed."

Nahi te munayobhrantah sarvajnatvattesham,
Kintubhirvishaya pravananamapatatah putrusharthi
Praveso na sambhavatiti nastikyavaranaya taistatha
Tatha bhedah pradarsitah.

The *Rudradhyaya* serves as a Kavacha as it is truly said in the prayers contained in the first Anu-

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vaka—*Rakshacha no adhichadeva-bruhi*. Rudra is styled "Bhishaq" (Physician) and is a Bhavaroga-vaidya. The prayer serves as a talisman (Raksha Kavacha) against disease, poisoning, and all evils arising from supernatural elements.

So 'yammantro vishajvara raksha pisachadi nikhilapida nivar-takah.

The great Lord Rudra is a discriminator of merits and demerits. He drank the deadly poison Hala-hala, and knowing its bad effects prevented its flow down the throat to prevent further harm to the world. The moon who is repre-sentative of ambrosia was held in high esteem and worn as an orna-ment on his head.

Gunadoshabudhogrhnan indu-kshveviveswarah,
Sirasa slaghate purvam param kanthenaivecchati.

Let us offer our salutations to that Lord who is remembered as the greatest (first and foremost) of gods and in whom are mani-fested all the other gods:

Yodevah sarvadeveshu maha-deva iti smrtah,
Tasmai namostu kurvana divi tisthanti devatha.

(Concluded)

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HINDUISM

in Retrospect & Prospect-6

AS I SEE IT

II

P. NARASIMHAYYA

Q. In the Kali Yuga, Bhakti has been described as the most suitable and easiest of paths for God-realisation. Yet, how is it that Vedantic teachings with their accent on Jnana are being given the pride of place by noted savants?

A. Without the basis of Jnana, (right knowledge), it is not possible to have right Bhakti, devotion to the right object.

Bhakti is a complex emotion, a many-sided ebullition of consciousness, comprising love and yearning towards some object.

The entire nature and value of Bhakti depends on the wisdom or unwisdom, Jnana or Ajnaana, with which the object is chosen and worshipped, as Satvika, Rajasika or Tamasika.

So, without the right knowledge to guide in the right choice of worship, emotion gropes and stumbles in the dark. As the psychologists say, without cognition emotion is blind. The path-finder is the Jnana.

The right object of Bhakti may be chosen for an unlearned individual, by someone with greater Jnana, a great scripture or the collective wisdom of his group, but in every case, by means of Jnana.

Further, for the development of Bhakti also, Jnana is necessary. Bhakti develops with greater knowledge (Jnana) of the object of worship, of Divinity. As the Bhakta knows more and more about the various aspects of Divinity, his devotion becomes more extensive, intense, ecstatic and more perfect. Sri Thyagaraja for instance, prays for knowledge (Jnana), to know more and more of the glory of Divinity; *evarani nirna inchedira Rama* and so on.

So, Bhakti needs Jnana for its right beginning and for its deve-

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lopment—its origin and perfection.

Bhakti may be particularly inculcated in the Kali Yuga, as an easy, popular feature of religion, and is more dynamic and living than Jnana.

Once the object is chosen, it is easier to awaken one's feelings of adoration, sing hymns and Stotras, decorate the deity and perform rituals.

A cold, intellectual concept of God is not sufficient for religion or self-fulfilment.

The emotional adjustment to the problems of reality and life, which comes from true Bhakti, gives great peace and strength and an optimistic inspiration. Thus religious faith (the right Bhakti) has immense therapeutic value also, as the modern psychoanalysts such as Adler and Jung have found. This is a much-needed emotional defence for the modern man assailed by materialist nihilism and the anguish of existentialist philosophies and scientific positivism.

But Bhakti by itself is merely subjective, an inner feeling. Bhakti of this subjective kind is not enough for the Kali Yuga. Our modern world needs the dynamic, external, social-service expressions of Bhakti. The needs of the time call for a religious dedication to humanitarian work in all fields.

The Bhakti which the Kali Yuga really needs is that which is integrated with both knowledge and action, Jnana and Karma.

Q. Is a Guru essential for one to enter the spiritual path and attain the goal? How does one recognise one's Guru?

A. A Guru, as a guide, whether for entering the spiritual path or later, is always helpful.

But one need not wait for the Guru, to begin one's moral and spiritual disciplines, critical reflections and meditations, worship, and dedicated humanitarian service.

A Guru is not an essential starter, a perennial crutch, and round-the-clock nurse.

One must, in real earnestness, live up to the highest he already knows and exercise his talents, heart and reason for the highest good of all. The initial Sadhana Chatushtaya, four-fold disciplines, are each man's own duty, his first task.

At the earlier levels, a teacher is necessary for learning the right breath-control, right and easy postures, for knowing the meanings of hymns and prayers, and a philosophical vision of Divinity, man and his highest fulfilment. Some may need a teacher's help also for choosing their own Ishta Devata for theistic meditation and worship.

Hindu teaching definitely indicates that when a Guru is not found, the society of other seekers or pilgrims on the path (Satsangha) help.

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In some cases, after meeting a few teachers or companions, an individual has gone forward by himself, and found enlightenment. Prince Siddhartha first went to various teachers, Kassapa, Kesa Kambalin and others, but carried on his quest in the increasing light of his reason and intuitions, and reached his highest Enlightenment as the Buddha.

The degree and the time of the need for a Guru is contingent on several individual factors,—one's inborn or acquired knowledge, earnestness, bodily and mental strength for a fast or slow tempo of progress. Many ardent devotees or aspirants have been known to rush their pace to the point of psycho-neural and physical breakdown. In such cases, a Guru's advice is essential.

In some cases, the Guru himself or herself has been known to come graciously seeking out the pupil, to help him. This happened in the case of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.

Adepts speak further of a testing period, (some Western saints have called it "a dark night of the soul") when the Guru, even if there is one, holds himself back from the pupil, the individual stands alone, and he is tested by all temptations, roused sub-conscious weaknesses, doubts, and the anguish of standing by himself against great evils. The scriptures speak of such experiences in the Buddha, Jesus Christ and others.

There has not been one rule for all pupils, in regard to Gurus, for they are not all at the same stage of discipleship.

But there is one perennial and universal Guru, a Guru for all, in all stages.

Adi Sankara speaks of the Supreme Guru, (Acharyendra), revealing in the silent dimensions of the intuitive spirit the ultimate wisdom and joy of perfection (*para brahma tattvam, ananda-roopam, chinmudram.*). All the sages and teachers gather their knowledge from this Guru. Here all find the revelation, the knowledge that solves all their doubts and difficult problems. Light comes in supreme measure, from the profound depths of life and soul, from oneself, and the infinite universe, and above all, from Divinity. Appropriately, Adi Sankara gives us a vision of the Cosmic Guru as seated in the wide open space of Nature...

So, the earnest individual finds in good time, help from a suitable, gracious Guru, or an elder brother among his fellow-travellers, his own burgeoning consciousness, and the infinite, immitigable, all-embracing life and heart which orders the universe and presses upward its evolution.

Q. Will Mantras lose their sanctity if they are not in Sanskrit?

A. In regard to Sanskrit Mantras, theologians claim that certain language-forms have an occult

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spiritual distinction and power for good (or evil) and that they lose this "sacred" power if the language (or verbal form) is changed.

But the same power may be claimed for some verbal forms of other languages also,—Tamil, Kannada, Bengali, Hindi, Telugu etc. No one language is nearer to Divinity, or more holy in its power, than any other.

But, Sanskrit Mantras, and also hymns and prayers, Stotras and Namavali have some special features of "sanctity."

Sanskrit has been moulded into a more perfect and more extensive medium of spiritual expression through a much longer period and by a far greater number and variety of sages and saints than any vernacular language of India.

The rhythms and structures of Sanskrit have, undeniably, become closer to—an integral part of—the religious spirit of India in all its many varied and rich forms.

Thirdly, it serves as the integrating religious language for the whole of India, transcending all divisions of local languages.

Furthermore, it is an invaluable spiritual elevation for all Hindus to say their own prayers and hymns today in the words in which Bhagavan Vyasa, Valmiki, Adi Sankara and others of that supreme order of spiritual perfection composed their hymns and prayers. This is not mere historical succession, a continued survival of old tradition. It is a spiritual identity, a participation in the spiritual life and illumination, the music and emotions built up by the foremost masters of varied types and over the longest period in world history. This is the special feature—the sanctity—of the Sanskrit Mantras, hymns and Stotras.

The vernaculars still function in our personal prayers, praise of God, thanksgiving, penitence, and pleading for Divine benediction—i.e., the whole extent of personal religious life.

Sanskrit is only used in collective worship in temples, the occasional domestic rituals performed by learned priests, and in the private worship of those people who have learnt the Sanskrit hymns, Stotras and Namavali.

Q. Are fasting and such other dietary regulations necessary for leading a spiritual life?

A. Fasting and other dietary regulations (like vegetarianism) are valuable, (even if not always essential), both as general disciplines of the will and also, as physical or bodily disciplines. Giving up food for some time, or some kinds of food, seems a small act of discipline when compared with the far greater disciplines of the mind and heart and the supernal powers of the spirit. But any discipline, at any level of life, is valuable, and any kind of debility of will, or self-indulgence sets back the clock of progress. William James, one of the founders of

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modern psychology, says, "Be ascetic even in little unnecessary things, so that your will is always strong and in good exercise, so that when the storms blow, you may stand like a rock while others are winnowed like chaff in the wind."

It is said of a revered pontiff, Sankaracharya Swami of Sringeri, that if any sweet or other food were served to him with the plea that it was very delectable, the Swamiji would smile and wave it aside.

Control of food is a part of the all-round discipline of the good life.

But is it specially necessary on occasions of spiritual or moral challenge? It seems to be so, judging from the fasts which Mahatma Gandhi, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and others have undertaken even for light on political and social problems. Such fasting is not mere penance, but seems to be an essential physical aid to spiritual and moral illumination, apart from its social effects on their followers. Jesus Christ at a great crisis is known to have fasted and prayed, and communed with Divinity.

Q. What is the role of rituals in religion? Are they to be discouraged as is being advocated by some reformists? Or are they to be encouraged? If so, in what form?

A. The more important uses of rituals are that they express our earnestness (Shraddha) and may in some cases also produce an (estoteric or spiritual) effect for the good of the doer and others.

Their full benefit lies, of course, in the doer's piety and heart and his understanding of their meanings.

Our rituals are solemn, benign (Satvika), beautiful, elevated by rhythms of immemorial hymns and Mantras, and the worship of different bountiful aspects of Divinity. They have a valuable role in religion, in individual and collective worship, and there is no reason for discouraging them.

But they should not be exaggerated as the whole of religion, or even as its heart and centre—(as Bhagavan Sankaracharya emphasised to Mandana Misra).

Because of the real values of rituals, they should flourish in the different religious institutions of Hinduism, in pontifical centres, temples, etc., and among the less time-bound, wealthy, capable followers.

The Arya Samajists and other modern sects have abridged them to some extent.

Further, Hindu tradition itself permits (and enjoins) their non-observance in certain times (Aapat Dharma) and stages of life.

Q. There are various Samskaras prescribed in the life of a Hindu, right from his birth to death. Many of these Samskaras are not being observed today. Should they be revived?

A. As in the case of all other rituals, the Samskaras also may be

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abridged and made more practicable for the common people, while the fuller forms are practised by others who can do so.

Hinduism has been criticised as being, in the stresses of modern life, obsessively ritualistic, burdened with too many and elaborate rituals.

Q. It is said that the Karma Kanda in the Vedas has almost gone out of use except for a few rites which remain in vogue for marriages, Shraddhas etc. Is it advisable to revive the Karma Kanda with its stress on the performances of various Yagnas?

A. The Yajnas are large-scale, collective prayers and rituals, which have different kinds of beneficial results.

Their utility for such public services as even invoking rain, has been demonstrated quite often, though science finds the causation difficult to explain or accept.

They should be fostered in places where they can be performed by dedicated pious experts, scholars and patrons for the good of all. The simplest forms of Yajnas render help and services and compassion for fellow beings, animal and human. There is no reason to jettison these, though all may not be able to perform them always.

One vital problem connected with rituals is that of the Purohitas. (Priests) They are a humble class with a precarious and scanty remuneration, and their piety and expertise serve the welfare of their employer (Yajmana). With the dwindling of this class, Hinduism will lose not only much of its ritualistic worship, daily and festive, but also a good part of its pious satisfactions and consolations and the earnestness of its followers.

Modern conditions require imperatively, something like a guild-organisation for the Purohitas, for their better training, easy provision of their services to all people, and, above all, for the improvement of their economic position.

Such a common organization for the betterment of Purohitas may also prove a convenient venue for working out a common set of rituals and training, and thereby an increasing integration of the sects of Hinduism. It is a project which deserves immediate attention.

Q. Hinduism has been defined as a Way of Life. In the present context what should constitute the Way of Life?

A. A Way of Life has to be based on a View of Life,—a world-view (Weltenschaung) and a life-fulfilment view.

The View of Life in Hinduism is set forth in its philosophy, theism and ethic.

From this trinity of Truths, certain rituals of worship, social customs and personal habits as well as behaviour patterns in the national, international, artistic and other spheres, are derived—Panchaseela, Atma-suddhi, Lokasangraha, Abimsa and others.

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These form the Hindu Way of Life. They express the self-identity of Hinduism, in actual practice.

Some social and personal ways of life may be derived also from social traditions or historical circumstances, like caste, Sati, backwardness of women, etc. They may linger on in the popular way of life, though they are not a part of Hinduism's doctrinal content.

Certain other ways of life, like Nature festivals such as worship of rivers, hills or trees (Tulsi plant etc.,) are derived from Hinduism's vision of the spiritual oneness of life and Nature, as well as from ancient tradition. Certain other factors in the Hindu way of life, like the practice of *jahor* by heroic Indian womanhood, may be derived from racial tradition and historical challenges as well as from Hinduism's ideal of womanhood.

Thus the Hindu Way of Life has different origins but the main pattern is set by the Hindu View of Life and Reality. From this point of view, the self-identity of Hinduism consists in its View of Life.

But it is a View which must express itself in the Way of Life. Hinduism is not just a set of wise and pious ideals, a holy ideology. It is a pattern of active life, life as nobly envisioned, and lived and developed to fulfil that vision.

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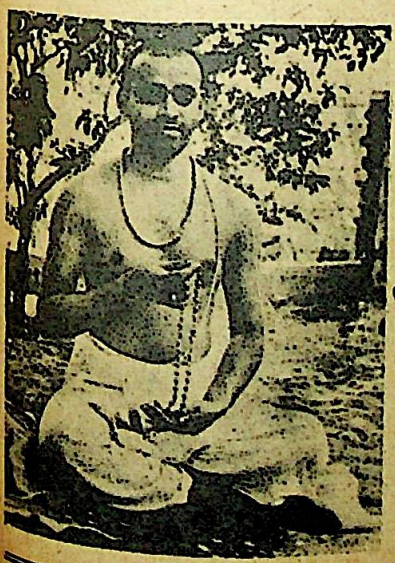

Discourses on

SRIMAD RAMAYANA

By

Mahatma

Sri Sri KRISHNA PREMI

(*Founder, Akhila Bharata Sadhu Sangam*

AT "GOKUL" (GITA GOVINDA HALL), SION EAST, BOMBAY-22

From 15 March to 21 March 1976

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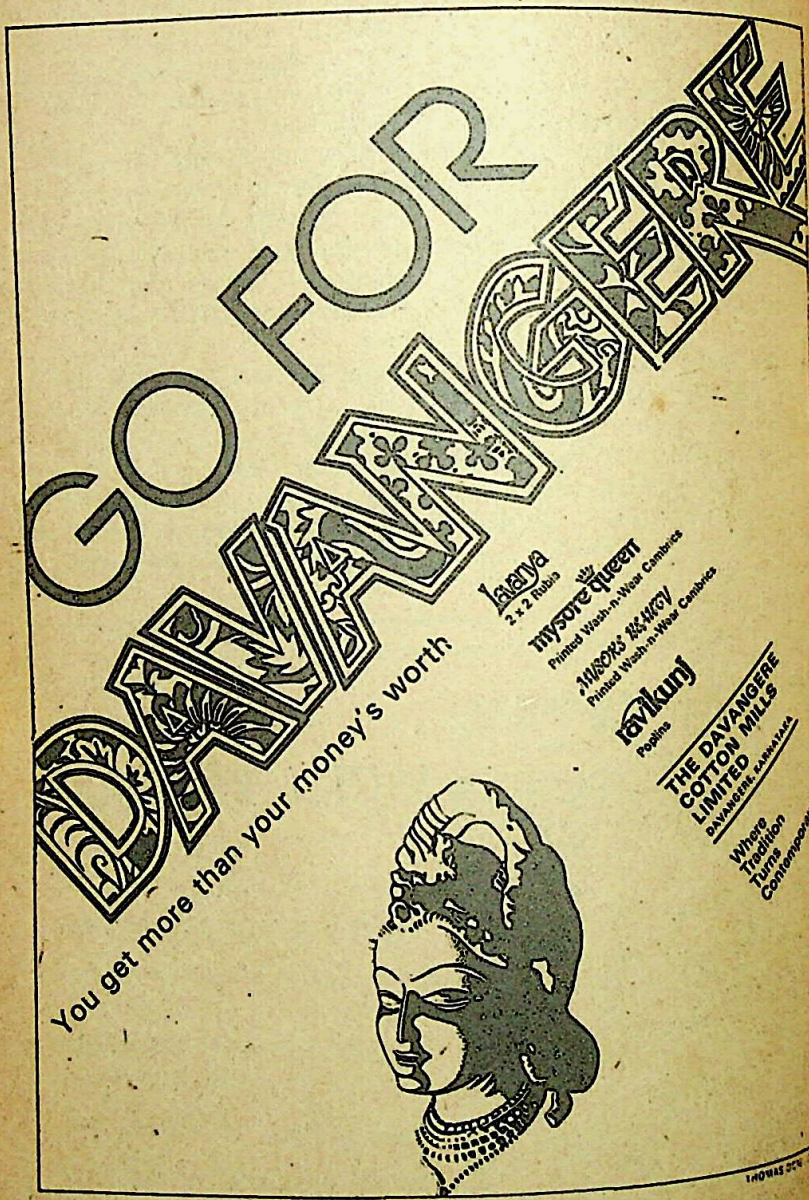
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Where
Tradition
Turns
Contemporary!
THOMAS DOM

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A pre-conception of things relevant and pertinent is necessary to understand any great book, particularly, the *Ramayana*. There is a back-ground for many characters here, information of which is to be gathered from other sources.

Who is Rama? Who is Sita? And who is Ravana?

As for Rama, it is mentioned by Valmiki himself that at the behest of the gods, Lord Vishnu is born to Dasaratha—the purpose being to bring relief to gods put to ills by Ravana.

Who is Sita? Other sources tell she is Vedavati born as Sita. Vedavati is an incarnation of the essence of the Vedas. She was born to a Vedic scholar. Many sought her hand and got repulsed. Her father died. She became a pauper. Ravana tried to maul her. She burnt herself in a big fire and told Ravana that she would be reborn and bring about the total destruction of Ravana.

It is also said that a child was seen in a lotus in a big pond of Lanka. Ravana wanted to bring her up. Being forewarned by Rishis that she would be instrumental for the total annihilation of Lanka, he put the child in a small box and set it to float in the sea. How much time passed is unknown. How the child could breathe in that box and live is enigmatical. How this box came to be unearthed by Janaka while ploughing a piece of his own land, a customary rite in Aswamedha Yaga, is also puzzling. Mithila, the capital of Janaka, is

What is Ramayana to me

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DR. VISWANATHA SATYANARAYANA

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far off from the sea. Did this little box travel underground to reach that field?

All the great heroes of the land failed to bend the bow of Siva to gain Maithili's hand. In some Ramayanas, it is mentioned that Ravana also failed.

Now Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu, is born in Ayodhya and when he was 12 years old was brought to Mithila to try his hand on the bow. The result was that he married Sita. She lived with him for some years in Ayodhya and for 12 more years in the forest. Then it is that she is abducted by Ravana.

In some of my previous articles it is clearly shown that Sita is all-knowing. She does things according to a plan. She was biding her time to fulfil the vow she had taken as Vedavati to destroy Ravana.

Valmiki, in the beginning of his *Ramayana,* speaks of his great book as the great story of Sita and now, who is Sita? She is not just the daughter of the King of Mithila. The child found in the little box is not born from the womb of Janaka's wife. Everything is shrouded in mystery.

Now Sita is Vedavati. She is the essence of all the Vedas. All the Gods are the same.

It was the moment of moments when Energy flowed forth from the omnipotent. Energy is a quality and is described as a female. Who is the male? That omnipotent mass is the male. That male and this female tripled themselves. There are three gods and three wives. Though functionally different, they are the same.

And so Sita now, is that first energy.

Sometimes, this energy being the first manifestation can function as the highest thing. She created this earth. She created all Gods. She is the first tender string of this labyrinth of creation. She took the whole authority into her own hands when she destroyed Sumbha and Nisumbha as Durga. But usually she delegates the duty to the male members of the hierarchy. It was she who arranged Rama to be brought there to bend the bow.

Twelve years of sojourn in the forest by Rama have passed. Now came the time.

Their aims—Rama's and Sita's—are one, but their plans and procedures are different. Sita has a plan and she makes Rama move in the orbit of her plan. In his younger days Rama killed Subahu and left Maricha and the mother's hand is there also. During the 12 years of sojourn in the forest she has nothing to do. But now and then she would object to Rama's killing smaller demons. Very peculiar of her it is!

Maricha came. Her plan is fructified. She made Rama and Lakshmana leave her. She made Jatayu combat Ravana, left her ornaments on the hill where Sugreeva lives, to inform Rama of the path Ravana has taken. Now she is in Lanka for no

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months. She did not take food nor did she sleep. Hanuman and the other demons say that her body is not reduced. Who is she? She did not go as the brothers did, getting upon the shoulders of Hanuman. She frequently says that it befits Rama to come and kill Ravana and then take her. Does not Rama know it? She once said to Ravana that she could reduce Ravana to ashes but for the consent of Rama. Why is Rama's consent needed here? How does she hope to get the consent of Rama?

Who is she? By the order of Ravana old clothes were wound round the tail of Hanuman. They poured oil over it and set fire to it. He was taken around Lanka with his burning tail. Valmiki used a verb, the root being *Ni* with the affix *Fari* which means also marriage. The demons that are stationed around Sita to continue their incessant threat used the same verb. This is a peculiar idiom in Telugu. Perhaps it is there in other languages of India. Sita prayed to the God of fire. Hanuman made Pradakshina to Sita with his tail in flames. How could flames appear? When something burns, the flames are there. Flames by themselves are never seen. Then the fire in the tail of Hanuman cooled. He thought it is done due to the greatness of Rama, because he is first the devotee of Rama and then of Sita.

At last he burnt the whole city

"If you really want to judge the character of a man, look not at his great performances. Every fool may become a hero at one time or another. Watch a man do his most common actions; those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man. Great occasions rouse even the lowest of human beings to some kind of greatness, but he alone is the really great man whose character is great always, the same wherever he be."

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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of Lanka, and was afraid that Sita also might get burnt. Then he asked himself: "How can fire extinguish fire?" It means that he knows Sita is fire. This is the real Sita!

Fire is the third manifestation of the omnipotence, the first two manifestations being immaterial for the continuance of the creation.

A great Tamilian anchorite, an Alwar, writes that if Rama so willed, as he did in the case of the demon crow, he could have killed Ravana by sending one single arrow. Why did he not do so? His answer may be one thing but the real answer can only be that Sita did not want it to be done.

Sita during her lamentations says: "Rama and Lakshmana are such archers and yet why do they keep quiet? What fault did I commit?" The great Alwar in his complete devotion to the Lord tries to show one or two faults committed by Sita. It may not be so.

In the end, Rama was very angry with Sita and made her undergo the ordeal of fire to prove to the world her purity.

Does Sita really need that test? Proved it is that it is superfluous. Then why?

Rama's purpose is not to demolish the whole of Lanka for one single Ravana. But it is the purpose of Sita to do it. The why of it will be shown in the next and final essay.

That the demons gorge on human flood, that they are full of cupidity and that they do terrible ills to men are there. Rama is obliged to invade Lanka and annihilate the majority of the demons because of Sita's desire. His anger towards Sita is for this reason. He, by himself, would have killed Ravana alone as he did in the case of the other great demons.

It is said that Rama has incarnated himself as a man who is surrounded by the first 'Agnana'. Rama and Sita, now act as human beings and now as Gods and with this range goes a remarkable flexibility which is needed for a *Kavya*.

When Valmiki says that this is the mighty story of Sita he means this, and now Sita is nothing but the activated energy that is Sakti.

(To be concluded)

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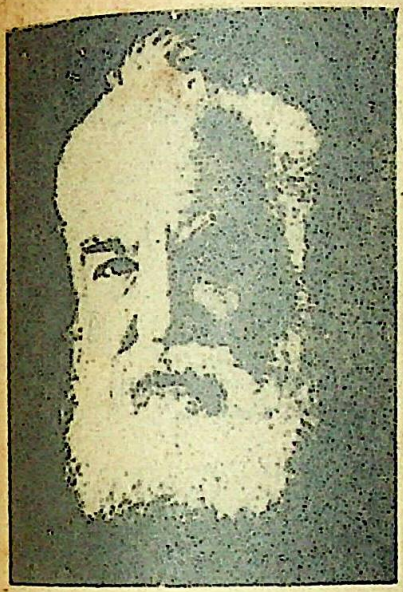

The Genius who gave us the 'PHONE'

T. H. CHOWDHARY

The District Manager of Telephones, Pune, recalls here the agony and ecstasy of Alexander Graham Bell.

VERY few inventions have proved so beneficent to humanity as the telephone. In 1865, a newspaper editor told his readers that "well-informed people know that it is impossible to transmit the voice over wires and that, were it possible to do so, the thing would be of no practical value."

Barely a decade later, the telephone erupted from Bell's laboratory and changed the world. Since its invention by Alexander Graham Bell, a century back (March 10, 1876) it has been so furiously proliferating that there are already 360 million telephones in the world for a population of 3,000 million. It is already adorning every home in North America, every office in Europe and Japan and is becoming increasingly evident in the rest of the world. While every year, the world population is growing at the rate of two per cent, the telephone is growing at the rate of six per cent. At these relative rates of rise, every person in the world can be expected to have a telephone in 56 years! Such in fact is the dream of a distinguished Telecommunication Engineer/Manager, Frederik R. Kappel who prophesied that every person born in the world will be given a (telephone) number and that if on dialling the number one gets a "number unobtainable" tone, it would mean that the person is dead!

Alexander Graham Bell was the grandson and son of distinguished teachers of phonetics. He was born in Edinburgh on March 3,

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1847. His father, Alexander Melville Bell, was a famous teacher of elocution, an expert philologist and author of *A System of Visible Speech*. From his childhood, Graham Bell was fascinated by experiments in speech conducted by his grandfather and the lessons his father gave. While he was with his grandfather in London on occasions, he saw the invention of Von Kempelen producing sounds of different vowels and some consonants as demonstrated by the English physicist, Sir Charles Wheatstone. He also saw Wheatstone's Enchanted Lyre, a device which was producing piano notes. These early exposures fired his imagination. Bell was educated in a high school and college in Edinburgh. Later he was at the University of London, and at Wurzburg in Germany, he took the degree of Ph.D.

From childhood, he had an inventive mind. While visiting a mill along with a group of children, who were invited to remove husks from wheat, he took his share of wheat home and removed the husks neatly by using a nail brush. He communicated the idea to the owner of the mill, who installed a machine for removing the husks, working on the brush principle.

When he was in London, helping his father, his health deteriorated. His father, already saddened by the death from consumption of his elder and younger sons, sent Bell away to Canada in 1870. He settled down on a farm on the Tutelo Heights at Brantford, Ontario, on the Grand River.

It is said that it was while he was here that he conceived his invention. Thirtyfive years back, in 1835, Samuel F. B. Morse, a Massachusetts artist and inventor, sent messages electrically over a wire in what has since become famous as Morse Code. Scientists and inventors predicted the possibility of transmitting speech itself but till then with no success.

Morse's work inspired Bell and as he put it, "if I could make a current of electricity vary in intensity, precisely as air varies in intensity during the production of sound, I should be able to transmit speech telegraphically." While fired with this idea, he was still working on multiple telegraph, that is sending several telegraph messages simultaneously over the same wire.

In 1871, he went to Boston and opened a school for vocal Physiology in association with Thomas Watson, his assistant. The event that led to the invention of the telephone occurred on June 2, 1875. While Graham Bell was perfecting the multiple telegraph he heard a ringing sound in the receiving apparatus and this convinced him of the possibility of reproduction of speech. (Canada in fact celebrated the centenary of the invention of telephone on June 2, 1975, as the idea was conceived by Bell while in Canada.) Bell contrived a mouth piece and receiver. On February 15, 1876,

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Graham Bell filed an application for a patent for his "improvement in telegraph," by which he meant the telephone. Hours later, Elisha Gray of Chicago also brought a caveat at the patent office, for almost the same invention. While these filings later led to a war of patent rights no device was yet demonstrated to reproduce speech over a wire. Bell and his assistant Watson went on trying in a Boston Boarding House. On the afternoon of March 10, 1876, Watson was in the basement with the receiver glued to his ear. Suddenly, he heard clear voices, "'Mr. Watson, come here, please; I want you." This was the first-ever human voice that was reproduced electrically over wires. The telephone was born.

Most people considered it as a scientific toy. Newspapers took no notice, in fact ridiculed it. Bell exhibited it in the first Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. He was given an inconspicuous place and very few people took notice of it, in contrast to Edison's electric lamp, the first printed telegraph and the first grain binder that were catching the imagination of the viewers.

One day Dom Pedro, the Emperor of Brazil, visited the Centennial, recognised the revered professor of phonetics, and the teacher of the deaf and dumb. He was requested by Bell to see his invention. The Emperor picked up the receiver, and Bell at the other end recited the famous Soliloquy from Hamlet, "to be or not to be"....

"My God"! cried the Emperor; "it speaks." This imperial interest and exclamation catapulted Bell's invention to a place of pride in the exhibition from that time. Bell went to England and further perfected the two-piece device into a single instrument containing the transmitter and the receiver. Incredibly, the *London Times* described it as an American humbug. All the same, the first Telephone Exchange was established in London in September, 1876.

Mabel Hubbard was a dumb daughter of an American millionaire. Bell taught her and courted her but was refused permission by her parents, when Bell was still a struggling inventor. Now with his fame of phone invention established, she was given to him as wife and thus Bell found the fortune to form Bell Telephone Company, with Watson, Gardener Hubbard, his father-in-law, and Thomas Sanders, another financier, as partners. That very Company is the progenitor of the world's largest company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Corporation, which carries a bell as its logo perpetuating Bell's memory.

In 1878, Alexander Graham Bell made a startling prediction: "It is conceivable that cables of telephone wires could be laid underground (it came true two decades later) or suspended overhead, communicating by branch wires with private dwellings, country homes, shops, manufactories etc.

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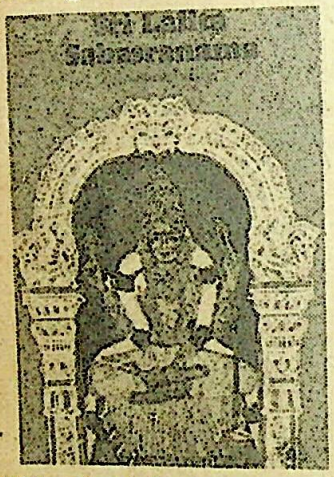

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uniting them through the main cable with a Central Office, where wires could be connected as desired, establishing the direct communication between any two places in the City. Such a plan as this (this is exactly what is now in practice) though impracticable at the present moment, will, I firmly believe, be the outcome of the introduction of the telephone to the public. Not only so but, I believe, in the future wires will unite the Head office of the Telephone Company in different cities and a man in one part of the country may communicate by word of mouth with another in a distant place. I am aware that such ideas may appear to you utopian..." A century since, they are not utopian but graphic realities.

His invention made Bell a rich man. He quit the telephone business altogether and settled down in a fine country home at Cape Breton in Nova Scotia and devoted himself to inventive pursuits. He invented the Photo-Phone, an apparatus for transmitting speech along a beam of light. He invented the Grapho-Phone in 1887 which was more or less the same as Phono-graph. He was interested in dynamic flight and experimented with kites. In 1906, he briefly indulged in sheep breeding with the idea of producing a strain of ewes which would always bear twins. In 1912, he put forward a plea for World English, a Universal language based on the phonetics of the English tongue. In 1919, he perfected the Hydro Plane. Such was his inventive pursuit.

Throughout his life, he wrote many papers and scientific monographs and was recognised as an authority on speech. He founded the "American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf." For some time he was President of the National Geographical Society. In 1898, he was appointed by the American Congress as regent of the Smithsonian Institute. In 1915, the first Trans-continental telephone line was opened between New York and San Francisco. Alexander Graham Bell was given the honour of inaugurating the Telephone across the continent.

Perhaps foreseeing what many harassed businessmen of today are doing, Alexander Graham Bell in his retirement stuffed his telephone bell with paper to prevent it from interrupting his work! And there is a story told by a woman who met him at a gathering. She came forward to be introduced to Bell, the great inventor. She said, "I often wish you had never been born!" Bell was taken aback. He was indignant. He appeared hurt. The woman was stupefied, felt miserable and was about to apologise. Bell smiled. "I know," he answered with a twinkle in the eyes, "I sympathize. I never use the beast."

He died peacefully in 1922 in his retirement. In silent tribute to so great a man, all the telephones

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in the United States went dead for a minute on that day.

The Telephone now is an ubiquitous appliance and a beneficent device. The globe is girdled along the ocean beds with telephone cables linking all the continents. Wireless, terrestrial, microwave-radio and communication satellites in space are carrying millions of voices across space, weaving countries and continents and people together in ever more meaningful interactions.

Soon, along with voice, one will be able to see the distant talker also. On the occasion of launching the Telestar, (the first commercial communication satellite) the great historian Arnold J. Toynbee wrote "to get to know each other, on a world-wide scale, is the human race's most urgent need today... And once this mutual familiarity is established, there is some hope that we may all become aware of the common humanity underlying the differences in our local manners and customs."

Bell's invention of the telephone started the annihilation of distance. His successors are building up the means of instantaneous and universal communication.

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Macmillan Becomes Bhavan's Honorary Member

The Rt. Hon. Mr. Harold Macmillan joined on February 24, 1976 the galaxy of great men who are the Honorary Members of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

The former British Prime Minister, a Patron of Bhavan's London Centre, on whom the honour was conferred at a memorable function held in Bombay's Taj Mahal Hotel has the added distinction of being the only non-Indian Honorary Member of the Bhavan.

In an emotion-filled speech hailed for its transparent sincerity, Mr. Macmillan spoke of the need for stressing the essential unity of mankind, for imbuing in the youth the triple virtues of faith, hope and charity, and of a new era of friendship between the East and West—ideals for which the Bhavan has been sincerely and consistently striving ever since its inception.

A detailed account of the function is given in the pages that follow.

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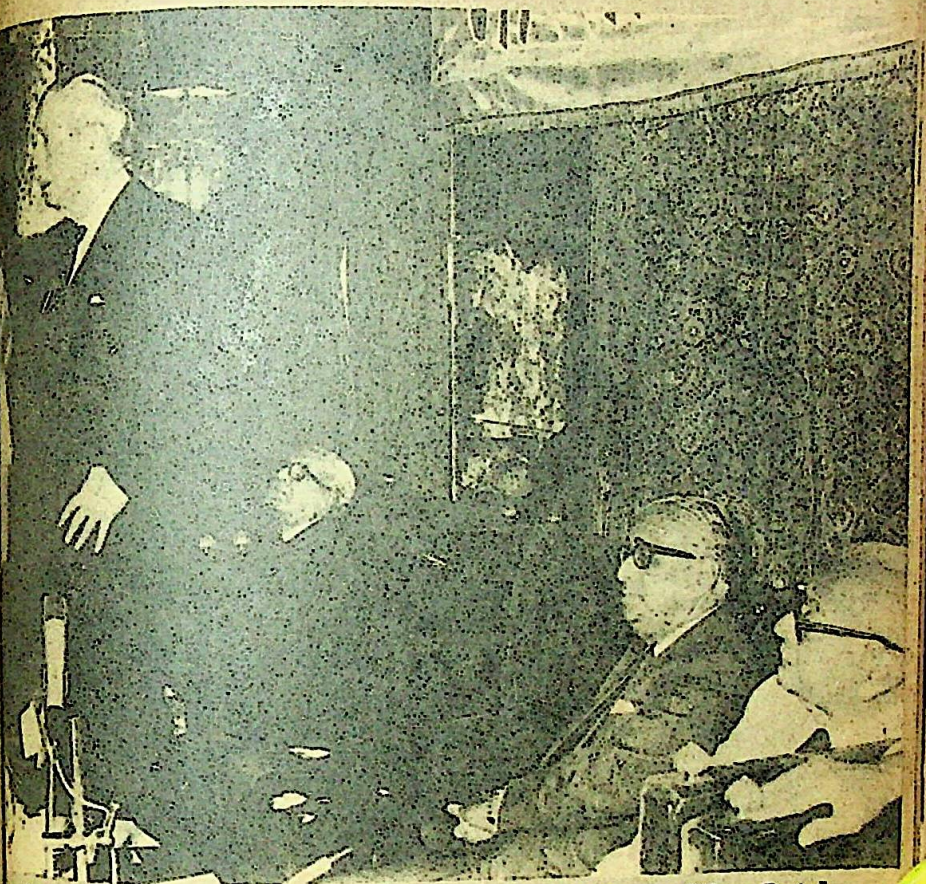

Age has not dimmed his eloquence nor retirement from politics affected his oratorial skill. The Rt. Hon. Mr. Harold Macmillan thrilled the elite gathering by his palpably sincere speech. Listening to him with awe, admiration and attention are: (L. to R.): Shri M. C. Chagla, former Indian High Commissioner in U.K., Justice Shri M. Hidayatullah, Bencher, Lincoln's Inn, who presided over the day's function, and Shri Dharamsey M. Khatau, President of the Bhavan.

TRUE to the tradition of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, the function began with Sarva Dharma prayers—from Hinduism by the students of Bhavan's Academy of Music and Dance, led by Principal Shri Dinkar Kaikini, from Islam by Prof. M. Y. Khan, Professor of English, Bhavan's College, Andheri, from Christianity by Prof. Cynthia Deshmukh, Professor of History, Bhavan's College, Andheri and from Zoroastrianism by Shri H. N. Dastur, Bhavan's Additional Registrar.

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Welcome speech by Shri Dharamsey Khatau, Bhavan's President

REVERED the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Macmillan, esteemed Shri Ghanshyamdasji, His Holiness Swami Dayananda, Shri Jaisukhbhai Hathi, and friends:

On behalf of the Bhavan, it is my great pleasure to welcome the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Harold Macmillan and you all in our midst.

We are beholden to you, Sir, for having done us the honour of accepting the Honorary Membership of the Bhavan.

Among the galaxy of the Bhavan's Honorary Members, we see free India's first President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. He was a man of vast learning, piety and wedded to the supremacy of the Moral Law. In spite of holding the highest office in the land, he was the very picture of humility and nobility, which evoked a spontaneous tribute highlighting these qualities from the hard-boiled John Gunther, justly famous for his information-packed "Inside" series of books.

Then we find the indomitable Sardar Patel, the Consolidator of Modern India. He was perhaps the greatest administrative genius of the century. His achievement of the bloodless liquidation of the 600 and odd Princely States without liquidating the Princes, has been hailed by many, including Nikita Khruschev, as greater than that of Bismarck.

And there is Shri C. Rajagopalachari famed as the "Nestor" of Indian politics. After a discussion with this astute and wise statesman in 1962 in the White House on Nuclear Ban Treaty, President Kennedy exclaimed that his meeting with Rajaji was "one of the most civilising influences of my life."

Also Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, internationally renowned scholar, teacher and philosopher-statesman, who, among many other international honours, was the recipient of the coveted award of the Order of Merit of your great country.

Present here today with us is Shri G. D. Birla, another distinguished Honorary Member of the Bhavan. A close associate of Mahatma Gandhi for well over 50 years, Shri Birla unreservedly placed his wealth at the disposal of the Father of the Nation. He is an ardent patriot of far-seeing vision and one of the seniormost captains of our Commerce and Industry, responsible for building up the industrial infra-structure of modern India.

And when I think of Shri G. D. Birla, who is youthful, vibrant and energetic at the age of 83, I am reminded that the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Macmillan is also of Shri Birla's age.

Rightly indeed has it been said that "Youth is not a time of life but a state of mind. It is a test of the will, a quality of imagination, a vigour of emotions, a predominance of courage over timi-

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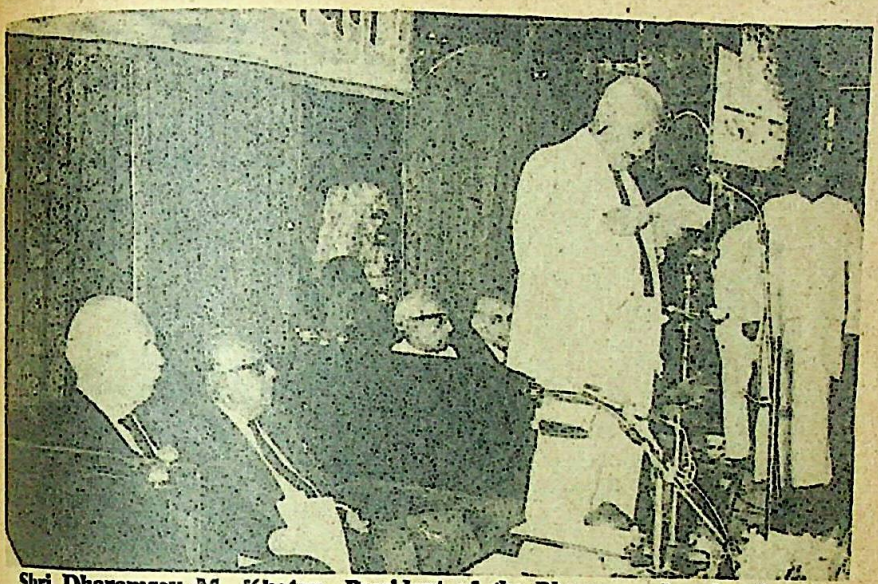

Shri Dharamsey M. Khatau, President of the Bhavan, welcoming the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Macmillan on behalf of the Bhavan. Seated (L. to R.): Mr. Macmillan, Justice Shri M. Hidayatullah, His Worship Mayor Nanalal D. Mehta, Shri Pravinchandra Gandhi, Trustee and Honorary Treasurer. At extreme right (standing) is Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary.

dity, of the appetite for adventure over love of ease. Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old only by deserting their ideals."

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is a charitable Public Trust, solely devoted to education, art and culture. The Bhavan is not a mere institution. It is a movement, a Cause. As Dr. Zakir Husain, eminent scholar, educationist, and a former President of India, said during our Tri-decennial Celebrations: "Looking back on the last 30 years, I find that the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has made a tremendous progress to which there can be only a few parallels, if any, in the annals of contemporary institutions. I do not think that even that incorrigible optimist and dreamer, my friend, Dr. K. M. Munshi himself, could have realised its present grandeur when, in 1938, he laid the foundation of this institution."

We, of the Bhavan, are certainly very proud to have the honour and privilege of the association of the Rt. Hon. Macmillan as a distinguished Honorary Member. You, Sir, are already an illustrious Patron of Bhavan's U. K. Kendra and your long life and purposeful work symbolise the ideals and aspirations of the Bhavan. You are an embodiment

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of sage-like serenity and dispassion, untrammelled by political passions and storms.

In India, Macmillan is a household name. I am certain that like me, most people in this gathering, must have studied in their student days at least one of the books published by the famous Macmillan Co., the great publishing house of Britain, of which our Chief Guest of today is the Head. Indeed, Macmillan publications have become in India, as elsewhere, a byword for excellence and quality, in content and production values.

In the modern world there is a craze for over-specialisation and expertise. Modern Universities and educational institutions are turning out "automatons" and "compartmentalised men" in such large numbers that G. K. Chesterton once remarked that "the ignorance of the expert is the ruin of mankind."

The Bhavan endeavours by diverse activities and through its 40 and odd institutions, to help the people in general and the youth in particular develop an integrated personality—what India's Vedic Rishis described as the "Poorna Purusha," and Francis Bacon characterised as the "full man."

Besides the gift of the English language, a window on the world, India owes much to the British—the administrative unity and continuity, the firm foundation for the Rule of Law and democratic governance.

The opening of Bhavan's first overseas centre in the U.K. with the blessings of men of eminence like Mr. Macmillan was a significant milestone in the history and growth of our institution.

You were kind enough, Sir, to grant a long interview to the Bhavan's Vice-President Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi and our Executive Secretary, Shri S. Ramakrishnan, in your historic family house in May 1973.

On that occasion you welcomed our proposal to start an International Institute of Moral Sciences, with headquarters in London, to promote the essential unity of all religions to foster the brotherhood of man and to resuscitate ethical and spiritual values in all segments of life.

The Bhavan's representatives had earlier placed this project before His Holiness the Pope Paul VI in Rome and he also gave his wholehearted benediction to this project. We hope, with the blessings and good wishes of the godly and good like you, this vital project will become a reality in the not-too-distant future.

Friends, it is not for me to recall here all the many facets of Mr. Macmillan's distinguished career but suffice it to say that he symbolises the finest and noblest traditions and ideals of the British race. He is by all standards one of the greatest of living statesmen, rich in age and ripe with wisdom. He is indeed an integrated personality, a gem of an ornament to any nation, at any time of history.

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Once again my hearty welcome on behalf of the Bhavan to Mr. Macmillan and you all.

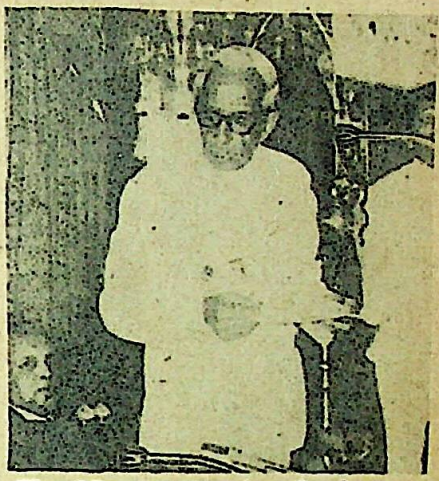
Welcome by Mayor of Bombay

AT the outset, as Mayor and on behalf of the six million citizens of this premier metropolis, I consider it a proud privilege to extend a hearty welcome to the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Harold Macmillan to Bombay.

Only some days ago, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan had conferred on Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India, the Honorary Membership. And, to-day, we have gathered here, Sir, to witness the conferment of this singular honour on your good self.

A gallant soldier in war times, a persuasive mediator in troubled areas, a distinguished scholar, a charming diplomat, you were an active parliamentarian for nearly 20 years and the Prime Minister of U.K. for over six years. You have left an indelible impress of your dynamic personality on your community and had the honour to be called a forceful and durable Prime Minister for the positive role you played in social reforms and economic development of your country.

Today, Sir, you join the galaxy of our Indian leaders. Already a distinguished patron of the Bhavan's U.K. Centre, your acceptance of the Honorary Member-



The Mayor welcoming the honourable guest on behalf of the citizens of Bombay.

ship of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is a great honour you have done to this International Cultural Centre.

The invitation card of the Bhavan bears a tiny *sloka* from *Rigveda*: "Let noble thoughts come to us from every side." Mr. Macmillan's admission into the Bhavan's portals will breathe new thoughts and noble acts.

Benediction by Swami Dayanandaji of Chinmaya Mission

The essence of Bharatiya culture in one sentence is that every creature, especially, every human being, is essentially divine and that man can discover that divinity. The aim of man should be the unfolding of this divinity that lieth dormant in everybody's heart. This divinity should be revealed through his art, his literature, his service to the society,

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H. H. Swami Dayananda Saraswati of the Chinmaya Mission giving his benediction. Next to Swamiji is Shri S. Ramakrishnan.

His private life and his public life. In Bharatiya Culture, this is very much emphasized. This you can find in Indian music, in Indian literature, this fact getting unfolded all along. Men of Mr. Macmillan's integrity in personal and public life are the type of men that our country needs and all the countries the world over need at any time.

Such people bring meaning to the life, private and public, and also it is such lives that help one discover the essential divinity in man—the essence of Bharatiya culture. I am very happy that Mr. Macmillan is accepting the Hon. Membership of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Speech by Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, Bhavan's Vice-President

In 1973 when I had the privilege and honour of meeting you at your historical house, I learnt a lot from you in those two and half hours of the interview. Since then we longed very much that a day may come when you would be coming to India and visit the Bhavan and receive personally the Tamrapatra, which day has ultimately come.

It is an important day in the history of the 38 years of the Bhavan's life and we are therefore, deeply beholden to you Sir, for having spared some time from your busy schedule to be with us here today and to personally receive the Tamrapatra which signifies the conferment on you of the Hon. Membership of the Bhavan.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan rejects such of our traditions as are outmoded and stifle the creative vitality of the individual and of collective life. The Bhavan tries to recapture and foster our fundamental values, re-integrating them with new elements suited to modern conditions.

The Bhavan recognises no antagonism between science and spirituality which it believes to be complementary to each other and mutually invigorating. It endeavours to strike a synthesis between material and spiritual values.

The Bhavan believes that revitalising ancient values and reintegrating them to suit the changing needs of modern times alone will give people the strength to assimilate whatever is good in the new,

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without being swept off their feet by the tornadoes rushing from several sides.

Kulapati Munshiji always wanted the Bhavan never to become static and always to remain dynamic. The Bhavan has very many new schemes of great significance on hand. But the lack of finances and proper man-power is a great handicap. Yet it forges ahead and has undertaken seven new research projects including "The National Integration on the basis of Ethical and Spiritual Values," "India's Foreign Policy from the Vedic Era to the Nehru Era," and "Critical Editions of the Upanishads.'

The Bhavan has also undertaken a gigantic project of huge dimensions. It is called "Ancient Insights and Modern Discoveries." The purpose of this project is to bring about a synthesis of ancient Indian insights and thoughts and the modern scientific discoveries and technological achievements.

The Bhavan also plans to start authentic courses in Indian Culture (including correspondence course).

It has also finalised a scheme jointly with the Tirupati Devasthanam to train up young educated Pracharakas who will carry to the world the message of Indian Culture and spirituality with a special

Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, Vice-President of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, recounting his visit to Mr. Macmillan at his ancestral home in 1973. (Seated L. to R.): Shri M. C. Chagla, former Chief Justice of Bombay, Shri G. D. Birla, Mr. Harold Macmillan, Shri Justice Hidayatullah, and Shri Dharamsey M. Khatau, President of the Bhavan.

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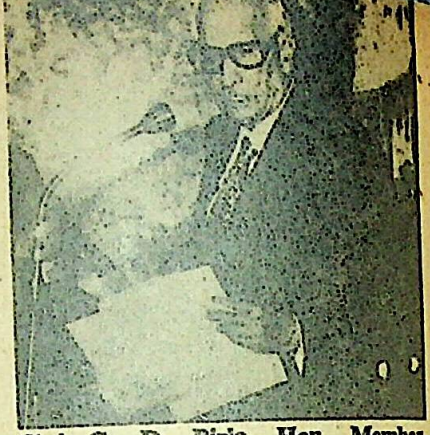
emphasis on the essential unity of all religions.

The Bhavan's greatest asset is the goodwill of the godly and the good. This precious asset is ever-growing and we are beholden to the Almighty for this blessing.

Speech by Shri Ghanshyamdasji Birla, a distinguished Honorary Member of the Bhavan, who read the citation conferring the Honorary Membership on the Rt. Hon. Mr. Macmillan

It is my proud privilege today to read the Citation on the Tamrapatra which is proposed to be presented to you (Mr. Macmillan) on behalf of the Bhavan by Justice Hidayatullah. As a distinguished Prime Minister of your country, your name is quite well-known in our country. You have been a friend of India and you are continuing to be a friend of this country. When India attained independence, we parted as friends and this friendship has grown more and more by the passing of time.

You left many things behind when you granted independence to this country. But the one thing which I value more than any other, is the English language. The Indian languages during the last 30 years have enormously progressed and flourished—but not at the cost of the English language from which we have benefited so much. I may, however, tell you, Sir, that India, after getting independence, has developed its own English—not the British English as it is understood. India is a mixture of many philosophies, many cultures. India is situated in the midst of three waters—that is, the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, and India is living in the era of the mixture of Indian English and British English. I am not ashamed of the Indian English and I hope and believe that when the future historians write the history of the development of English language, they will not fail to take cognisance of the fact that India contributed a lot towards strengthening what you may call the English English. This country highly adores the two rivers Ganga and Jumna which flow from the Himalayas and converge in Allahabad. Similarly the Indian English and English English—they both converge in this country and we are very proud of it.



Shri G. D. Birla, Hon. Member, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, reading the Citation.

Sir, now I take the liberty of reading the Citation.

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Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

The Rt. Hon. Mr. Harold Macmillan

In the name of the paramount values for which Bharatiya Vidya (Indian Culture) stands, namely, सत्यं (Truth), शिवं (Love) and सुन्दरं (Beauty), expressed through श्रद्धा (Faith), संयम (Self-restraint) and समर्पण (Dedication)

We, the members of the Bhavan's family, who are striving to build a modern bridge spanning the past, the present and the future, erected on the strong foundation of ethical and spiritual values and who are pledged to foster understanding and good-will between the East and West, *recall* on this happy occasion the heartfelt sentiments expressed on August 15, 1947—the day of Indian Independence—by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Indian Constituent Assembly, the first Head of State of the Sovereign Democratic Republic of India and a Founder and Honorary Member of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan: "Let us gratefully acknowledge that, while our achievement is in no small measure due to our own sufferings and sacrifices, it is also the result of world forces and events, and last, though not least, it is the consummation and fulfilment of the historic traditions and democratic ideals of the British race," and by Dr. K. M. Munshi, the founding-father of the Bhavan: "No power in history but Great Britain would have conceded independence with such grace, and no country but India would have so gracefully acknowledged the debt."

We *welcome* you in our midst not only as a distinguished Patron of the Bhavan's U. K. Centre, but also as a sincere well-wisher and a steadfast friend of India and a firm believer in the fundamental values of life.

We *honour* you as a World Citizen, who has, with exemplary devotion striven, with your heart and soul, to further the concept of वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्—"The World is one Family" and who cherishes India's ageless message of आनो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः—"Let noble thoughts come to us from every side."

We *greet* you as a man of unwavering faith and as one who looks upon all religions as a Commonwealth of Faith and who lives the ideal of सर्वधर्म समभाव—"Equal respect for all Religions."

We *hail* you as a shining product of the glorious traditions of Democracy; a great Parliamentarian of the century; an ardent social reformer; one of the most illustrious and successful Prime Ministers of the world's oldest and greatest democratic nation; a devout Champion of Peace, who made sterling contribution to bring about the first partial nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1963; and a leading Elder-Statesman of the world today, whose timely recognition of the "Winds of Change" blowing across the globe from the Third World, ushered in an era of understanding and constructive co-operation between the developed and developing nations.

And, above all, we *revere* you as a good and upright man whose very being exudes Faith, Hope, Devotion and Charity—sustaining and fortifying deep belief in the Majesty of the Moral Law.

As a humble token of its abiding affection and high esteem, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan confers upon you its

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Bombay,
February 24, 1976

President

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Justice Shri M. Hidayatullah, former Chief Justice of India, delivering his presidential address. Mr. Macmillan is seated by his side.

Presidential Address of Justice Shri M. Hidayatullah

The Vidya Bhavan is a reputed house of learning and you, Sir, also belong to a very famous and illustrious house of learning. It is thus proper that these two houses should have come together, as they have this evening in this happy function. The honour which the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has chosen to confer on you, has already been conferred on all the Presidents of India, and of all the dignitaries you are the only non-Indian on whom this honour has been conferred. (Applause.) After so many things have been said about you, I do not know what further I can say. Your life has been well-known to us and now we know it even better because of your *Memoirs*, of which a few volumes have come out and the last is on its way. We hope, it will be in a paperback also which is perhaps the only way the people can buy books today. In dealing with your achievements, I do not perhaps wish to indulge hyperbolically but I would rather refer to some very interesting events of which you perhaps would like to be reminded and which will also show the kind of man we have here for honour this evening.

After briefly recounting Mr. Macmillan's political career and the British history of the period with a remarkable memory, Justice Hidayatullah concluded:

I am extremely grateful to the Bhavan for having invited me to preside over this function. I am particularly happy to have made your (Mr. Macmillan's) acquaintance and I am fully honoured and privileged to make this presentation to you on behalf of the Bhavan. May I, on behalf of the Bhavan, on behalf of all of us present here and on behalf of myself, wish you all health and long life of utility to mankind?

Replying to the felicitations the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Harold Macmillan said:

I need hardly say that it is really a very wonderful reception

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All smiles. Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Macmillan is overwhelmed by emotion while receiving the Tamra Patra in token of the conferment of the Bhavan's Hon. Membership. The Tamra Patra is held aloft by Justice Hidayatullah and Shri S. Ramakrishnan.

which you have given me. All through my life, to which your President referred to in some detail, I have, like everyone else, had my ups and downs. Everyone has to face them and they are inevitable.

But what is important is the spirit in which we try to overcome the problems which we have to face. It is the lot of public men, men in public life, to face situations good and bad, not entirely of their own making.

Friends, when your Vice-President and others came to see me in my house three years ago, it never occurred to me that I would ever again be able to visit India. The wonderful reception which my dear wife and I were accorded when we visited India in 1958 in the proud position of the first British Prime Minister in office ever to visit India, is an event which I shall always cherish.

But these are matters of the moment and nothing to be compared with the great movement which you have launched. Yet, such memories remain indelibly in one's mind.

Sir, I cannot express to you how deeply moved I am at being awarded the great honour of the Bhavan's Honorary Membership and to be included in the distinguished company of the recipients of this honour among whom are the first President of the Indian

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Republic and the great philosopher Dr. Radhakrishnan, known and admired in our country equally as in yours, and whom I had the privilege of meeting at Oxford, many years ago. And really I cannot express to you the deep emotion which I feel in being included as the only non-Indian member of the Bhavan. (Prolonged applause.)

Those who spoke before me were good enough to refer to the long association between your country and ours and the mutual esteem and respect each holds for the other's culture, philosophy, religion etc. If India has benefited from its association with Britain, equally, and I would say much more, has Britain benefited from its association with India, particularly in the field of culture and tradition.

It was a very moving experience to hear the recitals of the various hymns, prayers: in Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism and a verse from one of our most loved English hymns, "Lead Kindly Light." And to my mind this represents the whole purpose of your movement, namely, to underscore the essential unity of all

Front Row: (R. to L.): Smt. Champubehn Dhanramsey Khatau; Mr. William Peters, British Deputy High Commissioner, Bombay; Smt. Champakbehn Nanalal Mehta. Second Row: (R. to L.): Mr. Patrich Wye of the American Express, Bombay; Mrs. Brozier; Rev. Brozier of the All Saints' Church, Bombay; Smt. Sudha Munshi; Smt. Usha Raghupathi; Shri Jagdish K. Munshi, Hon. Treasurer of the Bhavan; Shri T. D. Kansara, Member of the Bhavan's Council; Shri Hamir Vissanji; Shri J. M. Barot, Hon. Secretary, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

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religions, in spite of the superficial differences on the surface.

References have been made to the relationship between the house of Macmillans and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in their capacity as publishers. It was over 100 years ago when my father started publishing books in India. Of course the Macmillans turn out text books for the school children whereas Bhavan is turning out books to spread the message of Indian Culture.

I consider this as of great importance because with the rapid development in science and technology—welcome as they are—it is essential for the survival of the mankind to hold fast to the fundamental truths upon which depends all progress, life itself.

There is the problem of bridging the gap between the old and the new and synthesising what is good in both. While man can take pride in what has been achieved by his brain, it is necessary that he remembers with humility his smallness in God's scheme of things. It is necessary to harness to the scientific and technological progress achieved, the old tradition, old values, because without them life would be impossible, nay, meaningless.

This, I take to be the great purpose of your movement. Science has made the world very small, has made it shrunk. Yet in another sense there is greater accent on divisive tendencies of opposition,

The Rt. Hon. Mr. Harold Macmillan replying to the felicitation.

antagonism and hatred.

This divisive force must be countered and can be countered only by precept and practice of the fundamental unity of all religions and re-kindling the faith in the brotherhood of man.

If this is not done, our civilization would also end up in destruction as the earlier ones. The Apostle of Peace and his disciples, particularly St. Peter, have spoken of faith, hope and charity. Saints and sages of all climes have said the same thing. The greatest of these three is charity. In my capacity as the Chancellor of the

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I, S. Ramakrishnan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated 14-3-1976 Signature of Publisher } (Sd) S. Ramakrishnan

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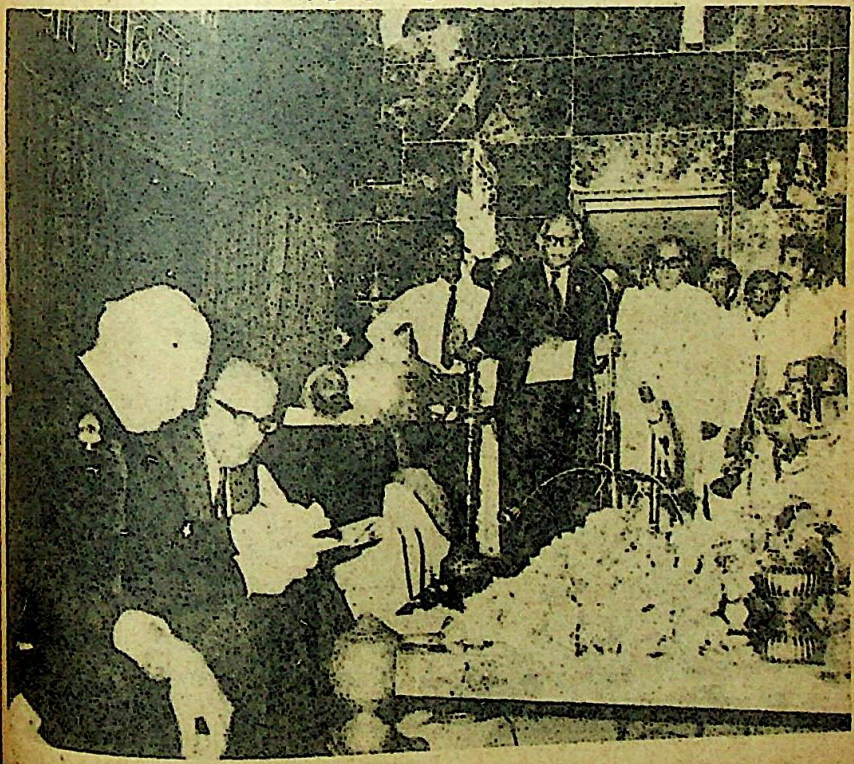
Oxford University, I have had occasion to deal with young men. They have hope; many of them have faith. But sometimes I wonder whether as individual, groups or nations, what we most need is not charity. This helps in appreciating the other man's point of view, his aspirations and beliefs. If life is to be made possible at all, I think, along with charity, nations and individuals should also develop a sense of humour.

At my advanced age there is little that I can do except in some small way help movements such as yours.

May I say that this has been a wonderful occasion, a great honour you have done.

Above all, I am overwhelmed by this wonderful gift which will be handed on from me to my children as something which I am really proud of. I cannot adequately express what it means to me—this generosity on your part, the bigness of heart and the sense of comradeship behind it. This I shall cherish for ever.

Shri Pravinchandra V. Gandhi, Trustee and an Hon: Treasurer of the Bhavan, proposing Vote of Thanks.



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"Macmillan" may be a household name in India, but it very nearly cost Mr. Harold Macmillan a vote once.

Mr. Macmillan referred to Mr. Dharamsey Khatau's compliment that in India "Macmillans" was a household name and related the following incident.

A man confronted him once and asked whether he was of the same firm which published a certain book on algebra. Mr. Macmillan admitted he was. Then the man said, "I will not vote for you."

Quite unperturbed, Mr. Macmillan told the man that he was probably in possession of the "wrong edition." "Try the one with the answers in it," he reminded the angry would-be voter.

The former British Prime Minister did not say whether he gained the vote.

Speech of Shri Pravinchandra V. Gandhi

Proposing a Vote of Thanks Shri Pravinchandra V. Gandhi, Trustee and Hon. Treasurer of the Bhavan, said that the Bhavan was grateful to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Harold Macmillan for having accepted the Honorary Membership of the Bhavan. By accepting the Hon. Membership, he said, Mr. Macmillan had honoured the Bhavan. (Applause).

Apart from his eminence as one of the greatest Prime Ministers of Great Britain, what he admired most in him was his great humanism and nobility. On his own behalf and on behalf of the Bhavan and on behalf of those present, he wished him many years of service to mankind, guiding younger men with his rich experience of men and matters.

He said the Bhavan was also grateful to Justice Shri M. Hidayatullah for agreeing to preside over the function at such a short notice. One could not but be impressed by his remarkable memory of men and events.

He added that the Bhavan owed much to its distinguished Hon. Member, Shri Ghanshyamdasji Birla, who agreed to read the citation conferring the Honorary Membership on the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Macmillan. He pointed out that it was seldom that Shri Ghanshyamdasji accepted and appeared at such public functions and this was one of the rare exceptions. The Bhavan highly valued his kindness. As a distinguished elder and one of the senior-most Hon. Members of the Bhavan, Shri Ghanshyamdasji had always readily helped the Bhavan when in distress with his munificence. The Bhavan always looked up to him for guidance.

Shri Pravinchandra Gandhi also thanked the audience for responding to the invitation, even though the notice was very short. It was a matter of regret that because of shortage of space, many others who were eager to be present at the function could not be accommodated. He regretted the inconvenience caused to the audience and hoped that they would look with indulgence at the shortcomings in the arrangements.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE: THE MUGHUL EMPIRE, Volume VII, General Editor, R. C. Majumdar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1974, pp. 1004 (with 22 illustrations, 5 coloured, and 4 maps), Price: Rs. 90.

THE Mughul rule, with which the present volume deals mostly, was undoubtedly the most glorious period in the history of Muslim India. Babar, the founder of the Mughul Empire, was a Titan. He reminded his son, Humayun, that India was a land of many faiths. "It is" he said, "incumbent on thee to wipe all religious prejudices off the tablet of thy heart: administer justice according to the ways of every religion".

This salutary advice was followed most scrupulously by his grandson, Akbar. The Emperor, who enlarged and consolidated his realm, though not always by scrupulous methods, won the heart of his people by his sagacious and humane government. Rightly has he been described as the wonder of his age and as one of the great men of the world. Unfortunately, not all of Akbar's successors followed his enlightened policy of religious toleration. The great Empire was eventually destroyed on the rocks of the Deccan following Aurangzib's unbridled bigotry.

The Mughul monarchs were able administrators whose government penetrated deep into the countryside. They set up a number of government departments which were manned by a well-organised hierarchy of bureaucrats. The intellectual elite among the Hindus, such as the Kayasthas, the Khatris, the Pandits of Kashmir and the Amils of Sind, contributed substantially to the ranks of the bureaucracy.

The Emperors and their dependent aristocracy were great patrons of art and literature. A number of modern Indian languages, including Braj, Avadhi, Bengali and Marathi, received the stimulus of royal favour. Francois Bernier, a Frenchman, who was court physician to Aurangzib, wrote thus: "The arts of Indies would long have lost their beauty and delicacy, if the monarch and the principal omrahs (Umra) did not keep in their pay a number of artists who work in their houses, teach the children, and are stimulated to exertion by the hope of reward"

The Mughuls were, however, stricken with the grave malady of dynastic feuds. They had an obsessional belief in the destructive doctrine, namely, that kingship knows no kinship. The wars of succession, along with the wars of aggression, gravely undermined the strength of the Empire, besides crippling the country's economy. Religious intolerance, which became evident in the latter part of the Mughul period, hastened the dissolution of the Empire. The Jats, the Sikhs and the Marathas, the last-named being the most formidable, delivered hammer blows at it till it was smashed to pieces.

Writing about the state of the country during the penultimate stage of the empire's disappearance, Bernier said that in the capital there was no "middle state." A man, must either be of the highest rank or live miserably. "Even a considerable portion of the good land", he observed, "remains untilled from want of labourers, many of whom perish in consequence of the bad treatment they ex-

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perience from the Governors". To sum up, the Mughuls and their functionaries were enlightened persons and added substantially to the cultural assets of the land but they signally failed to promote national consciousness.

These and many other facts have been discussed in great detail and with much authority by the learned contributors to the volume under review. It is true that the manuscript of this much-delayed volume was prepared long ago, many of the contributors being no longer alive, but the authoritative character of the subjects discussed is not in doubt. Apart from the proved eminence of most of the authors, it is most unlikely that new facts of much significance have emerged since they wrote their chapters to warrant a material revision of them. Historiography is a much stabler art than a discussion of current affairs.

In a fine tribute to the memory of Dr. K. M. Munshi, who inspired both the planning and publication of the Bhavan's monumental history series, Dr. Majumdar says that he was absolutely untrammelled in putting into the volumes what was considered historically true. Though a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Munshi allowed the criticism of the Mahatma to pass when he was convinced that it was well-founded. Says Dr. Majumdar: "He had already earned my love and respect, but to this was now added admiration for a high degree of intellectual integrity—so rare in the leaders of Free India".

—V. B. Kulkarni

IN HARMONY WITH NATURE by the English Ecology Group. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Pp. 49. No price noted.

MAN'S depredations upon Nature, wanton diminution of natural resources and consequent pollution and impoverishment of the environs are the subject matter of this small booklet. It acknowledges man's striving to bring about harmony with nature but castigates his thoughtless exploitation and suggests practical steps for restoring the dwindling natural resources and harnessing powers of nature that have so far not been tapped. The narration, simple and telling, lifts in perspective to a higher plane of emotional and spiritual kinship and integration with the natural environments.

The conclusion is drawn that it lies with man to be stupidly wasteful and destructive of nature's bounties and also it is in his power to rehabilitate the environs and undo the mischief he has done; and finally to take on the responsibility of working with Nature instead of spending his time in countering Nature, and so to usher an era of meaningful and joyous existence, free from fear and hunger, from suffering and disease.

The first Chapter deals with harmony with the elements—Light, Fire, Water and Air—which form perennial sources to draw inexhaustible advantage and cure the poverty of world's power supply. The next three Chapters deal with harmony with the Earth and the Plant and Animal Kingdoms. Ignorance of the laws of nature has created deserts and barren hills, silting of rivers and pollution of the atmosphere, which if allowed to continue unchecked will bring universal disaster. Exploitation of forest and mineral resources has assumed dangerous proportions. Rearing of animals for eating them has denuded vital food supplies. It is a truism that controlled breeding of domestic animals, instead of forcible rearing by artificial insemination, can offset the leaping increase in human population. Cutting of trees, wastage of water supplies and killing of animals for experiments, pleasure and food have wrought havoc and brought dis-

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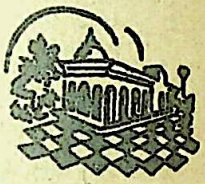

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harmony between man and nature. Artificial insemination of animals and methods adopted for checking growth of human population are leading to gross distortions of the balance of nature. The fifth Chapter deals with man's harmony with himself—with that Self within the self which is a part of the Divine. It is harmony with the Life-Source. An all-embracing harmony rests in man's own perceptiveness. That aperception helps in the process of evolution. Any upsetting leads to conflict between man and beast, man and plants and between man and man. A conscious awareness of one Life pulsating in everything can provide man with a power that would make his work effective in the great field of Ecology. In this context a re-examination of the theory of re-incarnation and cause and effect is seriously asked for. In the last Chapter there is the call for harmony of man with the Divine, with the Cosmic Intelligence that manifests as Evolution, as energy, as beauty, as love. Love is the Law and any transgression brings suffering and defeat.

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It is altogether a rewarding reading. It gives the message of discerning unity in diversity that is recognised by all religions and towards which philosophy and science are pressing forward to find the real meaning of life—the Reality.

—V. N. Hoon

SWARAJYA ANNUAL 1976, Pp. 176, Price: 7.00.

IN keeping with its high standard both as to production quality and the contents, the 'Swarajya Annual Number 1976' is a publication worthy to adorn the shelves of book-lovers all over. Particularly interesting are the many illuminating articles on Commerce, Industry and Economics from the pen of eminent men who can speak with authority in their chosen field of operation.

Besides agriculture, which is dealt with generally by Shri S. Y. Krishnaswamy, I.C.S. (Retd.), the other industries and branches of agriculture extensively dealt with are the textile, cement, sugar, refineries, leather, small scale industries and plantations.

Apart from the contributions from Union Ministers like Shri C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, Shri T. A. Pai, Minister for Industry and Civil Supplies, and Shri Kamalapati Tripathi, Minister for Railways, the Number abounds in studied essays by such masters as Shri R. Venkataraman, Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah, Dr. Y. Nayudamma, Dr. B. D. Nag Chaudhuri, Dr. B. Natarajan and captains of industry like Shri M. M.

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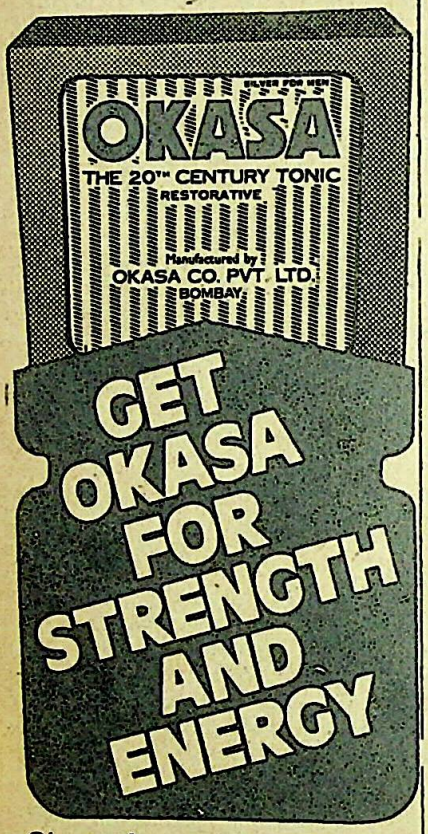

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Muthiah, Shri L. G. Balakrishnan, Shri S. Narayanaswamy, and others.

One welcome departure in the Contents is the emphasis on the economic growth the country registered during the year in the various sectors of commerce and industry with a corresponding reduction in the space devoted to politics and allied subjects.

Another novel feature is the statistical tables provided at the end giving the progress made in the working of the 100 largest companies in the country. Also the table of index numbers which follows gives an idea of the economic growth in the country during the past year.

All in all, the publication is one which every one, particularly those engaged in commerce and industry, can scan through with advantage and profit.

—C. K. Venkataraman

SANSKRIT

SRIKRISHNAASHTOTTARA SATANAAMAAVALI by H. R. Rao, Pp. i to vi + 9. Price Nil. Available on request from the author, "Gurukripa", 25 A, Kamgar Nagar, CST Road, Bombay-400 024.

AN ardent lover of Sanskrit and a devotee of Sri Krishna, the author has brought out this devotional hymn for spreading Bhakti and thereby universal peace and understanding.

The author has taken meticulous care in the use of every syllable in the composition of this work which is rich in literary values.

The Invocation in the form of a Namaavali or garland of sacred Names recalls the glory and the outstanding events in the life of Lord Krishna.

This work which lends itself to be set to music is designed to appeal to the head and the heart of His devo-

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ges. Though abounding in rhyme, the author has never attempted to achieve melody at the cost of meaning.

An inspirational effort dedicated at the feet of the Lord, the Namaavali is replete with hidden or suggested meanings which add to the aesthetic value of the work. In the elegant front cover showing Radha and Krishna, the name of the book and that of the author are superimposed in such a way as to resemble a garland around the deities.

—A.N.

SHRI YAMUNASHTAKAM OF SHRI VALLABHACHARYA, Edited with Hindi Commentary by Shri Ranchhod Kaladhar Bhatt; Published by Shri Ratikant Bhatt, 22, Dadabhai Road, Vile Parle (West), Bombay-400 056. Price: Rs. 11.00, pp. 49 + 10 full page illustrations.

SHRI YAMUNASHTAKAM is a praise of the sacred river Yamuna in her divine aspect as a consort of Lord Sri Krishna, the Supreme personal Godhead, composed by Shri Vallabhacharyaji, the founder of the famous Vaishnava sect, **Shuddhadvaita**, with a view to attaining admission in the eternal divine sport of Sri Krishna.

He has composed 16 fundamental and authoritative works, propounding the outline of his sect's typical, most intimate approach to the divine personality of Sri Krishna.

The work under review forms the first canonical representation of the mode of worship, accepted in his sect. It consists of eight lyrical verses containing a spontaneous outpouring of devotional sentiment. The author has rendered the original Sanskrit text into Hindi metrical translation and has written an extensive Hindi commentary based on five Sanskrit commentaries, written by devout scholars, born in the lineage of Shri

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Do not take trouble to keep up the friendship of worthless men. It is well to allow it to die out, be it ever so sweet and honey-like.

What matters is whether we gain or lose the friendship of selfish men who when it is profitable to them befriend us and leave us when it is not?

—The Tiru-Kural

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Vallabhacharya himself.

Devotion being the most direct and intimate relationship of the individual to the Universal Self, the sentimental outpouring of a devout heart has a unique value that a true devotee alone can appreciate. From this standpoint, it may safely be asserted that the attempt of the author has been remarkably successful.

With every stanza goes an appropriate and suggestive illustration—each an exquisite piece of art—enhancing the total effect of the contents. The book is excellently got up and deserves a place in every library.

—Prof. R. T. Vyas

HINDI

DHARMA-MANOVIJNANA AUR SHRI RAMAKRISHNA by Dr. Hriday Narayan Mishra, M.A., Ph.D., published by Sahityalochana, Pustak Vikreta, 106, Shahrarabag, Allahabad-3; pp. 16 + 314; 1st edition 1975; Price: Rs. 40.00.

FROM time to time in different countries there appear men and women who have experience, in rare moments, of a more exalted state of living than we know of in the common every day life of our time. Such a man or rather a superman is Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa about whom so much has been said and written by so many in different countries, in different languages and at different times that any fresh attempt now is bound to be caught up in a redundancy. This applies equally well to the book under notice though its author claims that he has looked at the phenomenon called Ramakrishna Paramahamsa from a different angle and in a different perspective. Whatever it is, a book on Ramakrishna is always a source of perennial charm, appeal and inspiration.

It is immediately clear that the author's bold and balanced attempt to disestablish a theory that Ramakrishna was something of a neurotic or a hysteric or a maniac, is, indeed, convincing and cogent (see pp. 236-237), though it is always unwise to wish everything explained. Mysticism is a thing about which we know that it is, though we do not know how it is.

Mystics have experience of direct correspondence with the Power behind the creative Activity—with the spirit of the Universe—with God. Therefore, what they have to tell is specially worth hearing and emulating. It is more so in the case of Ramakrishna because he lived and moved in a not-too-distant past.

The author has tapped all available sources to authenticate his account of Ramakrishna's boyhood, trances, married life, suffering, vision and experience of God. In the concluding chapter, he has tried his best to analyse and critically examine Ramakrishna's religious experiences in the light of the latest scientific research and psychological discoveries. While doing this, the author has mainly drawn on works by Thule, Carrington, Underhill, Divakar, James and others.

Dr. B. L. Atreya's "Two Words," Swami Nityatmananda's Introduction, and Dr. Abhayachandra Bhattacharya's Foreword pay a tribute to the author's ability and achievements. The Bibliography covering books on Ramakrishna in Urdu and Arabic also, the Glossary of Words, and the Index add to the usefulness of the book.

The book is Copyrighted. It should receive a good response from the Hindi-knowing public as there is a comparative paucity of books on Ramakrishna in Hindi. However, its prohibitive price will certainly come in the way of its brisk sale.

We recommend the book to those interested.

—Dr. A. S. Gopaul

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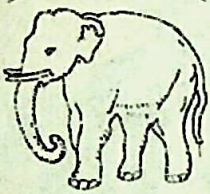

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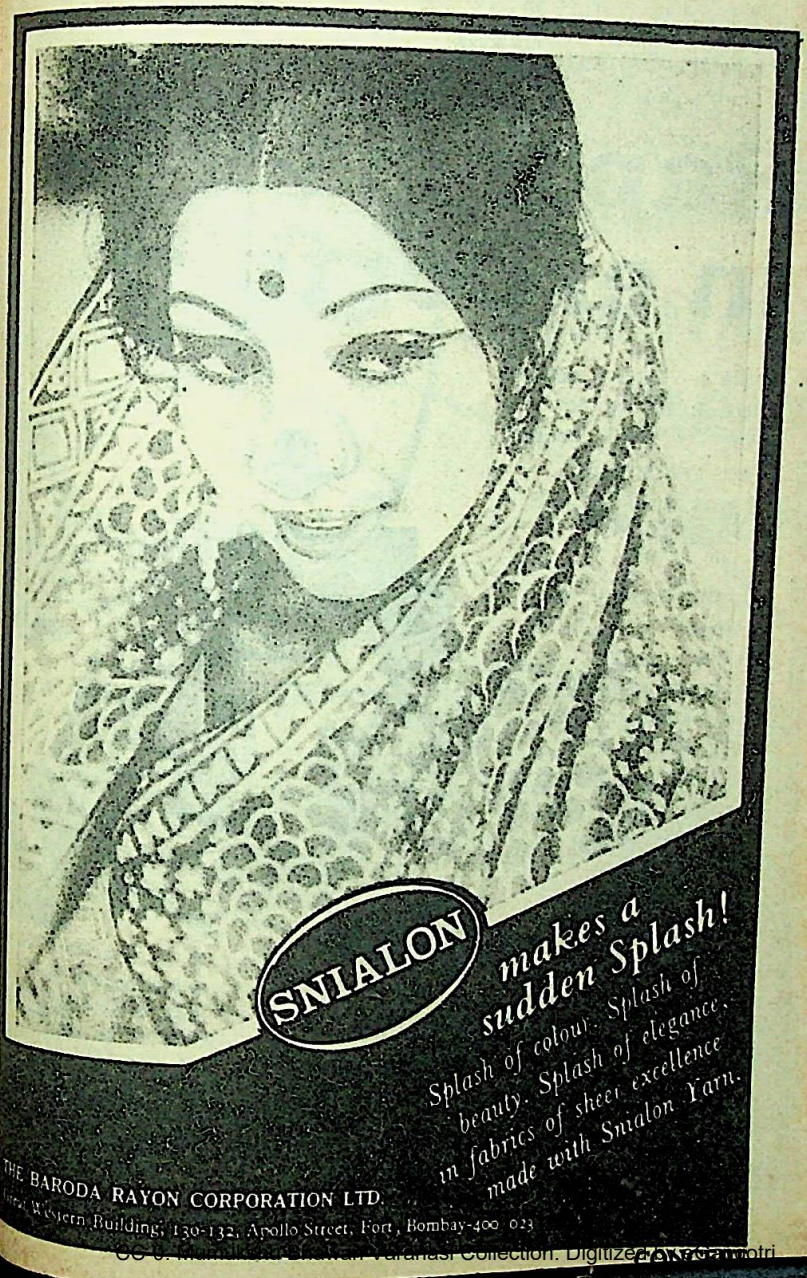

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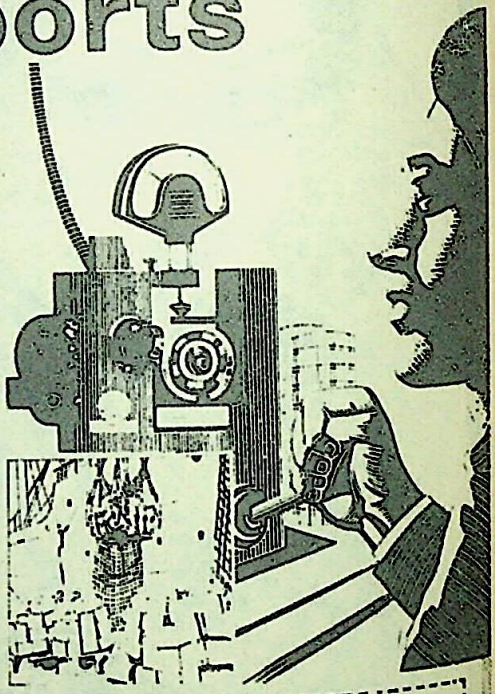

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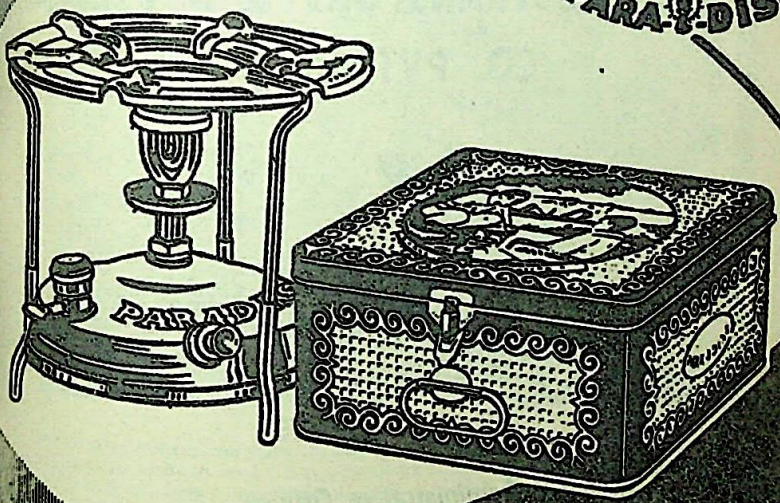

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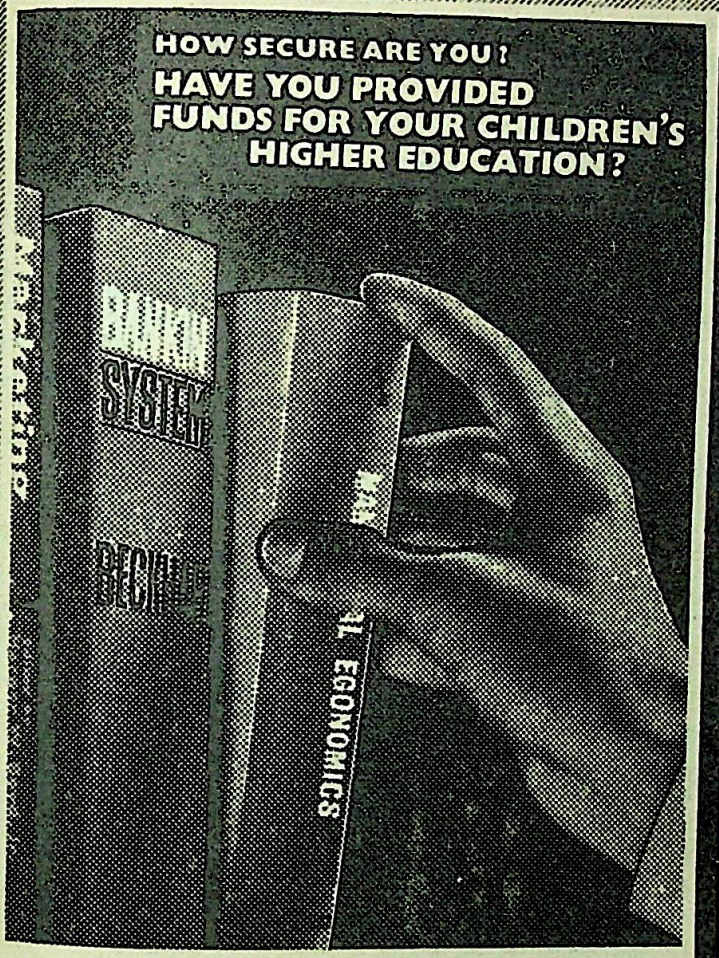

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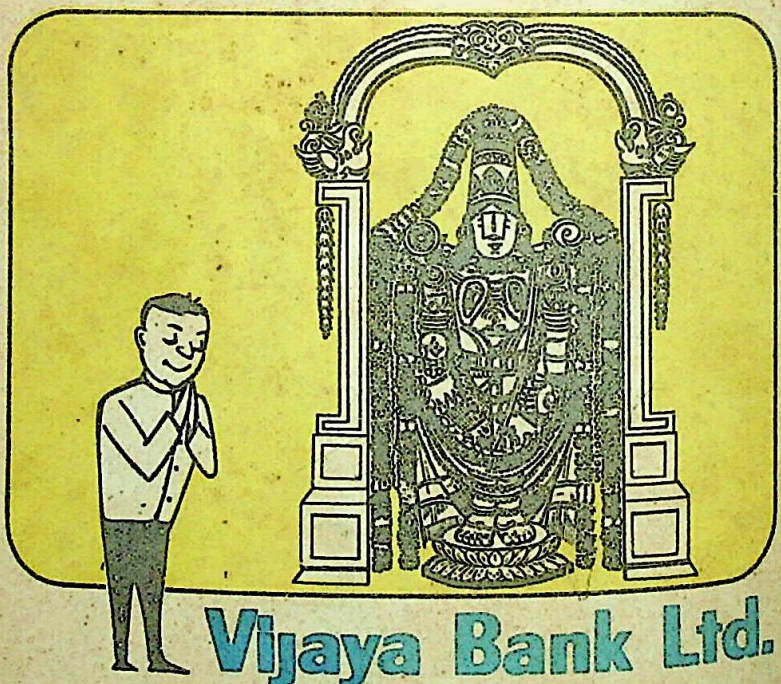

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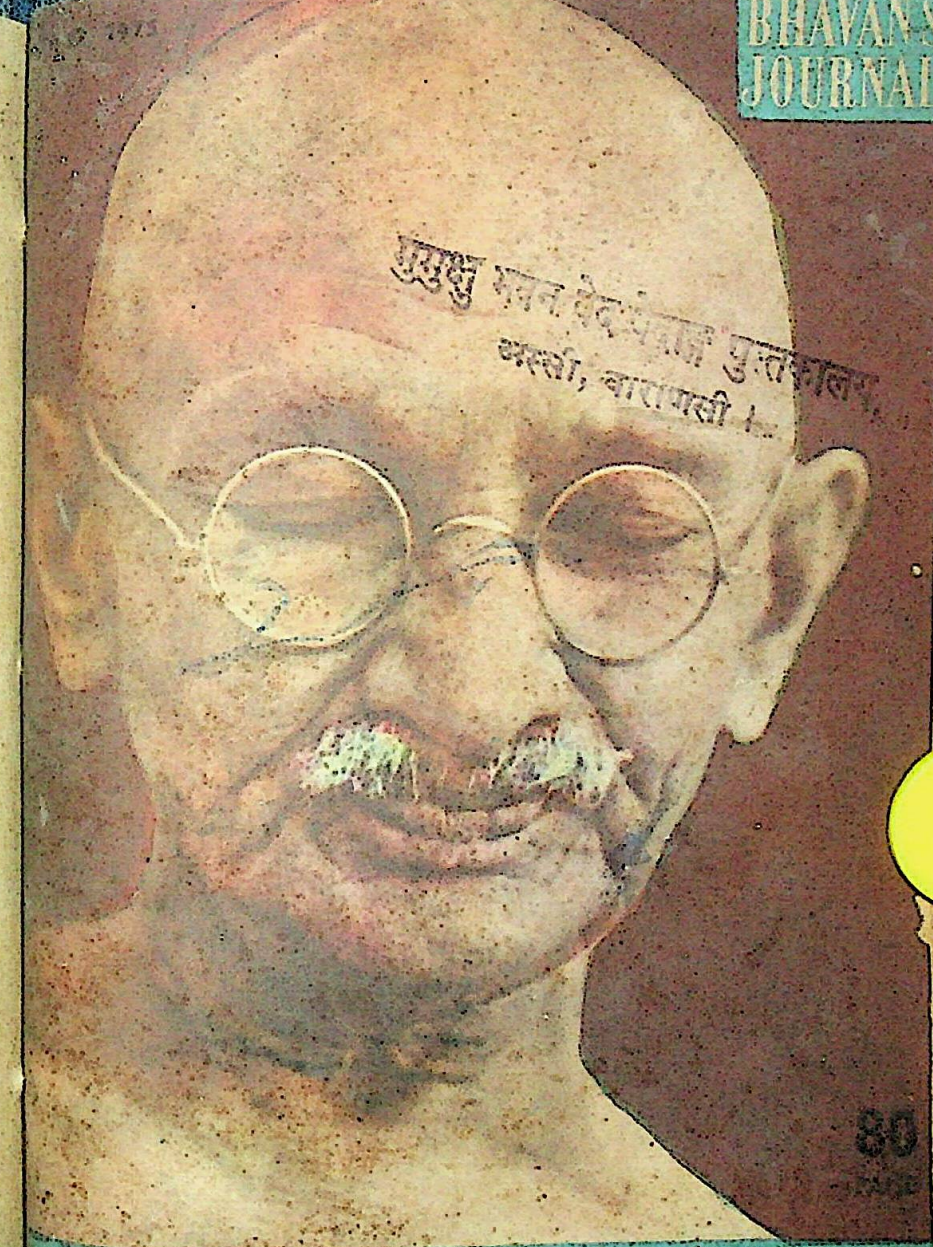

80

It is not too late to mend matters provided we forsake selfishness, and adopt selflessness, abandon fear, cease to be hypocrites, and become honest and upright, moral and truthful.

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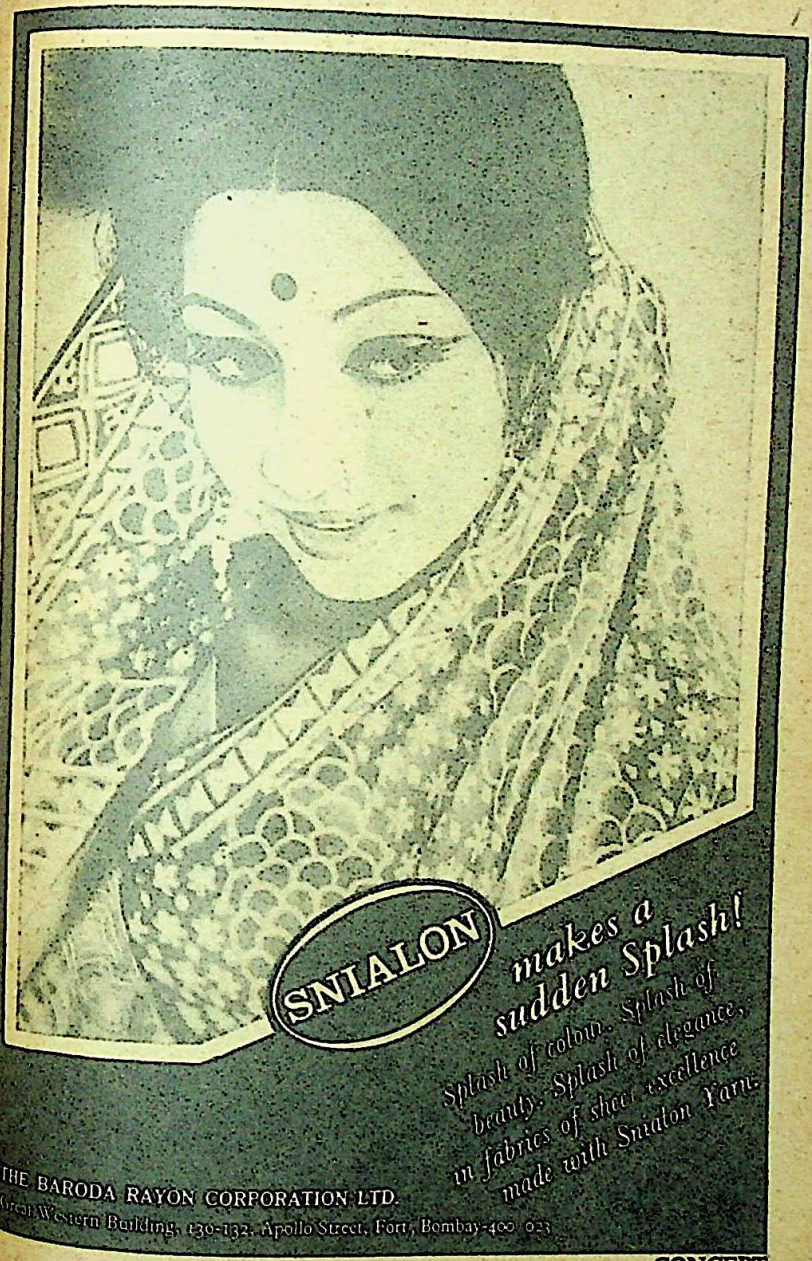

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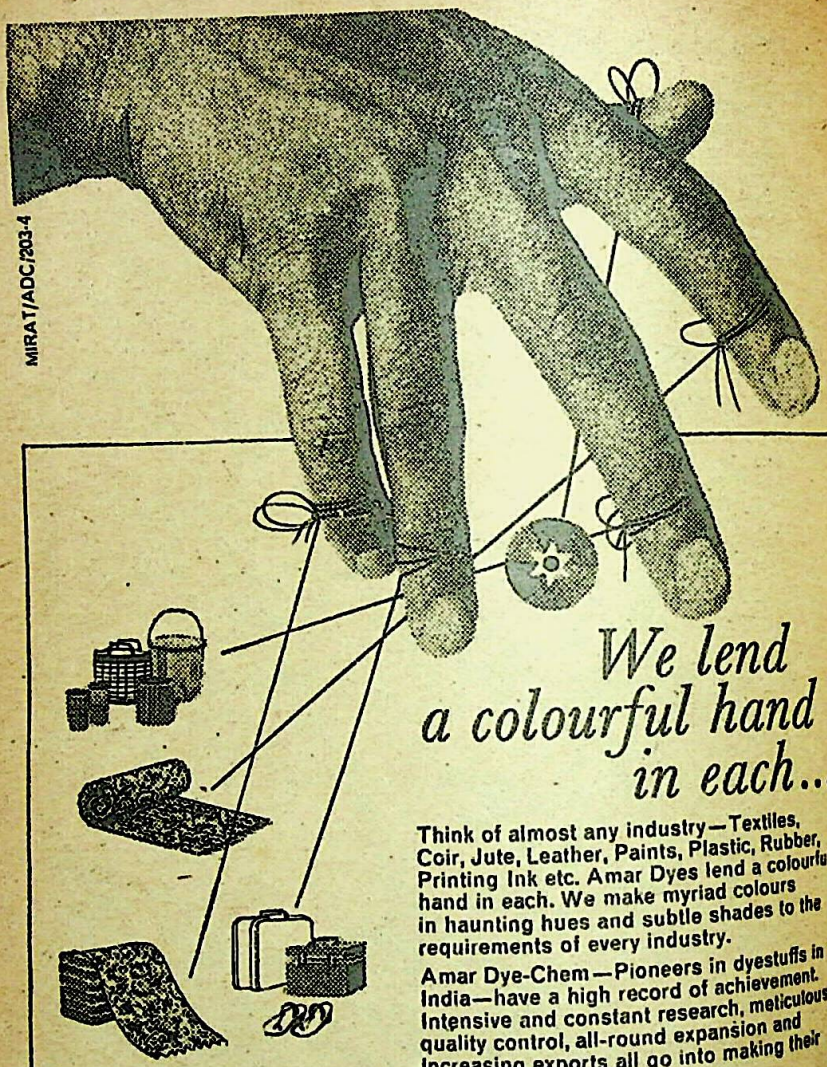

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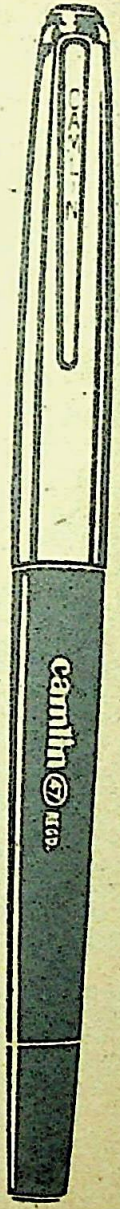

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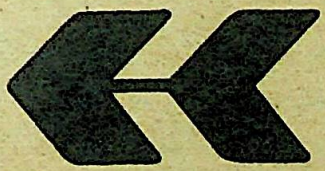

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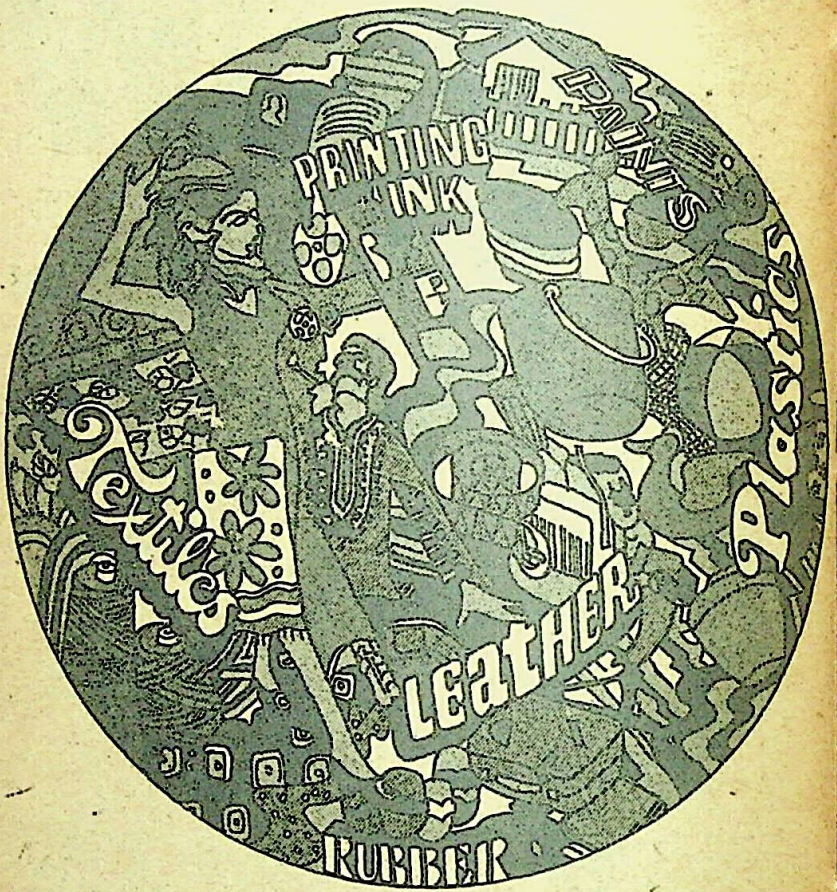

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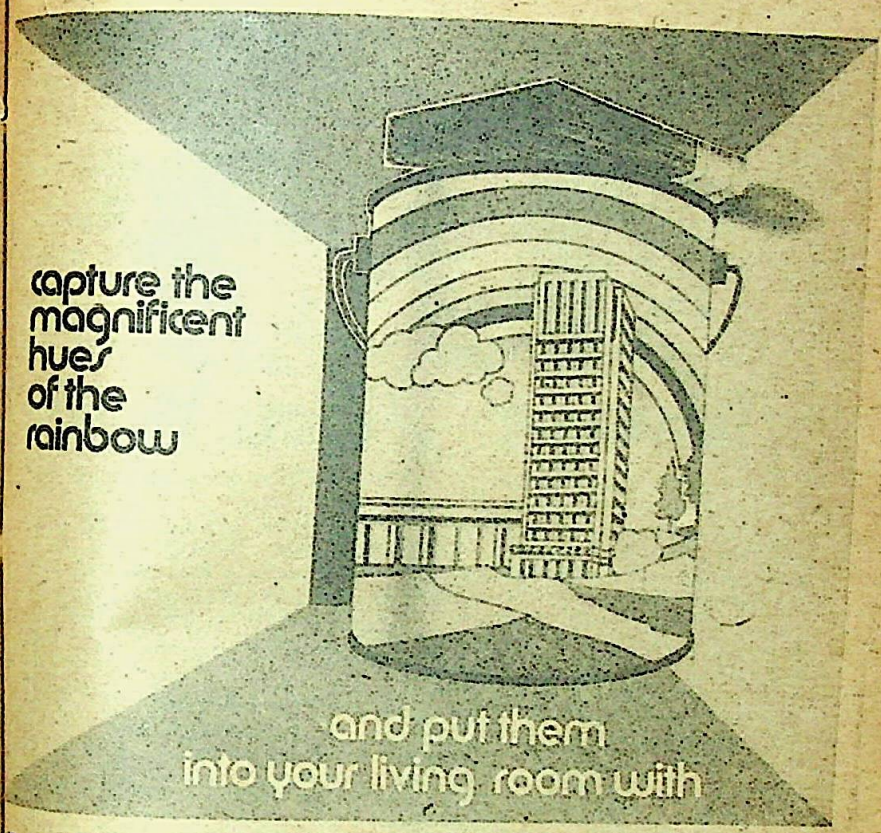

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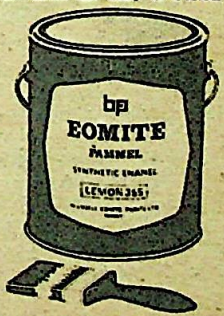

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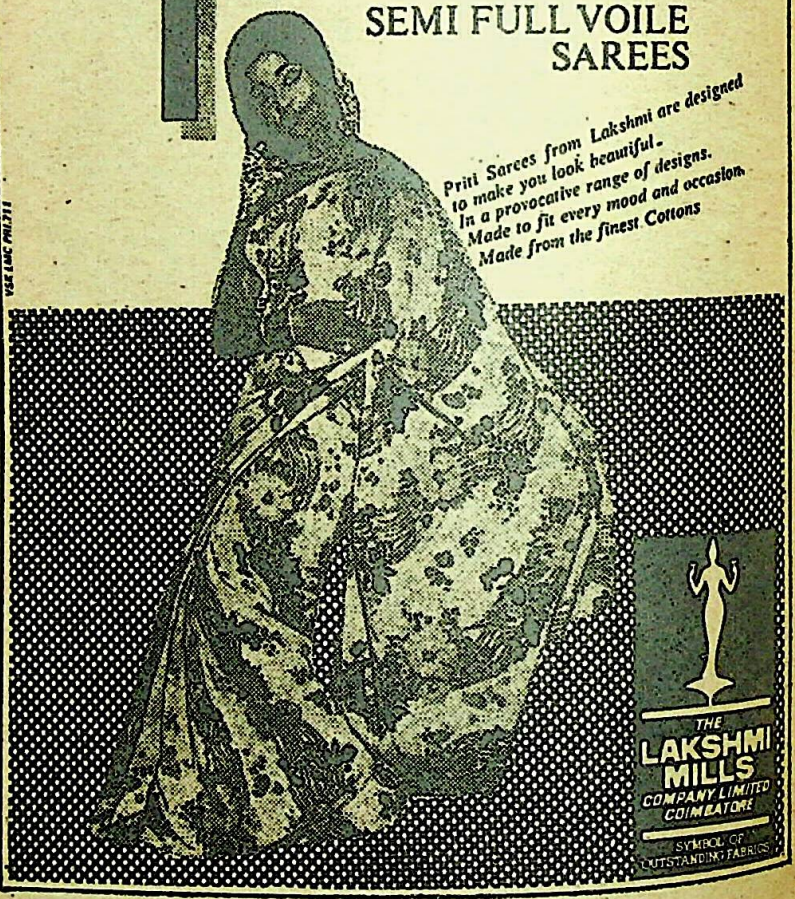

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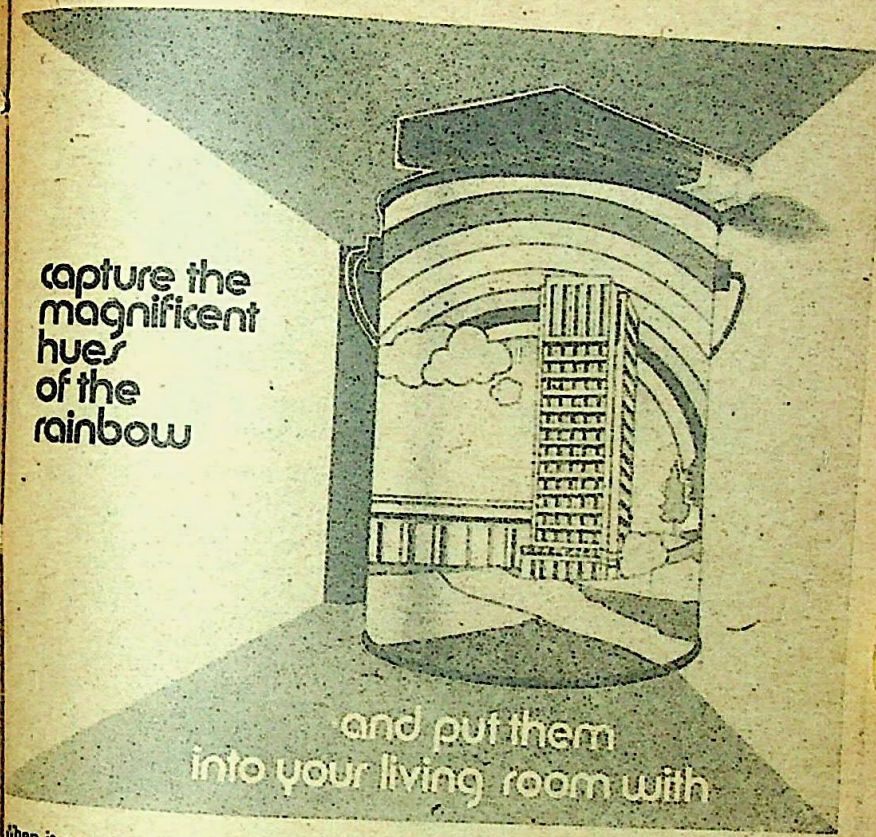

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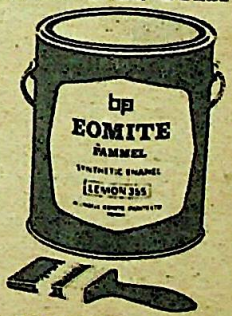

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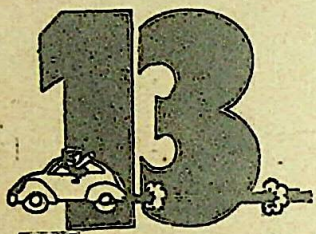

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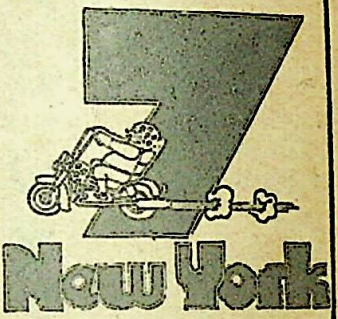

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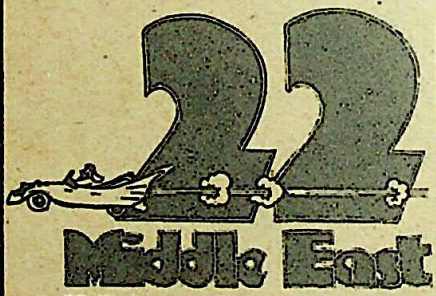

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OUR COVER:
Mahatma Gandhi
—The Father of the Nation

The "Vaishnava Jana To" feature will be a major attraction in our Diwali Number dated Oct. 26, 1975.

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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः
Let noble thoughts come to us from every
Rigveda 1.

BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

PRAYER

न त्वहं कामये राज्यं
न स्वर्गं नापुनर्भवम्।
कामये दुःखतप्तानां
प्राणिनामार्तिनाशनम्॥

Neither do I desire kingdom, nor
heaven nor emancipation from rebirth
All that I desire is that those being
that are scorched by pain should be
divested of this pain.

—*from Ashtav*
Bhajanavali

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KULAPATI VANI

TRAIL OF GLORY

FATE has its own irony; Gandhiji who practically banished the terrorist cult from India became himself its victim; the last one, I hope.

Gandhiji passed away in a blaze of glory. His life, because of the martyrdom, became more majestic and soul-stirring.

No great man, known to history, has publicly confessed to so many weaknesses and blunders. Not that the others were not guilty of such lapses, but their sense of Truth did not demand an open acknowledgement.

He was the first to practise what he preached. If the sense of possession was sin, it was a sin for his wife, Kasturba Gandhi, to keep even a few rupees with her, however innocently.

His uncanny perception, his gift of evoking loyalty, his extraordinary capacity of organisation, would have made Gandhiji found an empire in any age when empire-making as a career had been open to any man.

For the first time in the history of politics, Gandhiji's insistence on Truth challenged the Machiavellian political tradition that the end justified the means. Truth must prevail in politics as elsewhere, for politics, according to Gandhiji, could not be isolated from a reilgious devotion to Truth.

"At one time", he said, "I thought God was Truth. Now I know Truth is God." □ □ □

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President's Letter

My dear brothers and sisters,

I returned to India in the first half of September.

Shri Girdharilalji Mehta, our Senior Vice-President, whom I had requested to be the Acting President during my tour abroad, shouldered the burden with commendable ability and conspicuous success.

Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, the other Vice-President and Chairman of the Central Kendras' Committee and also of our Delhi Kendra, also visited the Bhavan's Headquarters several times during my absence from India.

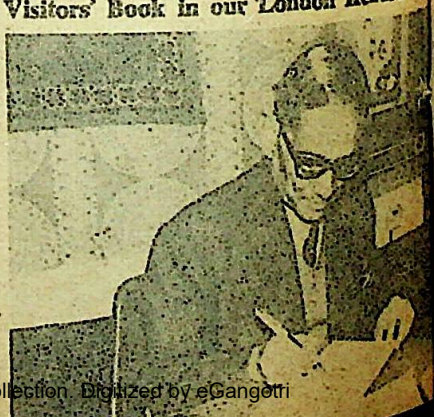
It is a pleasure to work with such dedicated, dependable and diligent colleagues. They and the other devoted members of the Central Executive Committee, the Chairmen and members of the Kendra Committees and the staff make my work as President, whether I am in or outside India, positively purposeful, generating inner joy and spiritual upliftment.

Indeed, Bhavan's work is God's work, as Kulapati Munshiji was never tired of emphasising—*Iswarasya Eva Idam—it belongs to God alone.*

II

I deeply regret to inform you that Shri Shrigopal Nevatia, Honorary Secretary of the Central Bhavan and Chairman of our Press Comittee for over thirty years, passed away on Friday, September

Shri S. G. Nevatia signing the Visitors' Book in our London Kendra



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19, 1975, after a brief illness. He was 68. He leaves behind his wife, Smt. Subhadra Devi, and two sons, and a large circle of relatives and friends. I would like to share with you the condolence letter I wrote, on behalf of you all, to his sons, Sarvashri Kamal Nevatia and Vimal Nevatia, "Ratnakar", Bhagwandas Indraji Road, Bombay. (400 006).

To us in the Bhavan, Shrigopalji's sudden demise is an irreparable loss. He was a tower of strength and we will sorely miss his wise counsel and sagacious guidance. He was one of the chosen few whom Shri Munshiji depended upon to shoulder the burden of the Bhavan when he (Shri Munshiji) was no more on the scene.

With his unsurpassed organising ability, quiet efficiency, great resourcefulness, aesthetic taste and deep insight into men and matters, Shrigopalji's contribution to the consolidation and expansion of the Bhavan has been very considerable. We cannot think of the Bhavan without him—he was so much in Bhavan's life and part of it.

The void in your life, by his passing away, will be very difficult indeed to fill. However, the knowledge that so many members of the Bhavan's family in India, and outside, besides your own large circle of relatives and friends, share your grief may somewhat mitigate the intensity of your sorrow.

May the Lord give you all the strength and fortitude to bear this grievous loss. May He bestow on you both His blessings to follow in your

Shri Shrigopal Nevatia honouring Shri Ramanatha Shivratan Kahar, Bhavan's oldest employee on his retirement. Looking on is Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary of the Bhavan.

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The Nevatia family during a visit to Bhavan's London Kendra in June 1975. Third from right is Shri S. G. Nevatia and at extreme left is Shri Kamal Nevatia, eldest son of Shri S. G. Nevatia.

distinguished father's footsteps and outstep him in your own contribution to Life, Literature and Culture.

In June 1975, Shrigopalji visited our U.K. Centre. A man of piety and prayer, he spontaneously offered to instal in the Central Hall of our London premises marble idols of Radha and Krishna. Immediately on his return to India, he promptly placed an order for the idols with the famous Jaipur artisans.

Shrigopalji's demise is a great blow to the Bhavan. This has cast a greater responsibility on us all—in the Central Bhavan and in the Kendras.

III

In the month of February 1975, we opened a Kendra at Kakinada —the third Kendra in Andhra Pradesh. To Shri V. Bhanumoorthy, the Kendra Chairman, and his colleagues, I offer, on behalf of you all, our hearty congratulations and best wishes.

Three more Kendras of the Bhavan are being planned—in Allahabad, Banaras and Calcutta.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whom Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru hailed as the "captain of our forces of free-

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dom and consolidation—the builder of modern India," was, along with Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Sri Rajaji, a distinguished Honorary Member of the Bhavan. In 1962, we built up an Engineering College and named it after the Indomitable Sardar. Pandit Nehru inaugurated the College, and dedicated it as a "working memorial" to the Sardar, whose dictum was: "Let words pass; let deeds speak."

On October 30, 1975, Sardar's 101st birth anniversary, our College of Mass Communication and Management in Delhi and a Hall in our Delhi Kendra complex are also being named after Sardar Patel, as a token of our esteem and respect for this great son of Mother India.

The Bhavan's Delhi Kendra has been running, for over 20 years, a very useful and successful Academy of Foreign Languages, teaching French, German, Russian, Spanish and Japanese. We are now enlarging this by adding some Indian languages such as Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu. The other Indian languages will also be added, one by one. With these additions, it will become an Academy of "Languages" and cease to be an Academy of only "Foreign Languages."

Jawaharlalji, a man of genuine culture, was a great well-wisher of the Bhavan. We get a glimpse of his penetrating insight from the following remarks about our activities during his first visit to the Central Bhavan in Bombay on September 15, 1950:

> *My visit here has given me a peculiar satisfaction and pleasure. The Bhavan has established itself in the hearts of the people and it is filling a vacuum which exists in Indian life. I am sufficiently impressed—almost overwhelmed—by the variety of activities that go on in this building—activities which normally, unfortunately, are not encouraged in India and there are not too many places in the country where attention is paid to the cultural aspect of our life.*
>
> *A very fine institution which deserves every encouragement and support.*

On November 14, 1975, the nation will celebrate Panditji's 85th birth anniversary. On that occasion, as a token of our high esteem and respect to this ardent patriot, who was totally dedicated to the noble aspects of Life, Literature and Culture, we are naming our language-teaching unit in Delhi as *Jawaharlal Nehru Academy of Languages.*

Panditji and the Sardar were shinning symbols of dedicated and purposeful team-work—often subordinating each other's strong personal views, in the larger interest of India as a whole.

The best tribute to these great

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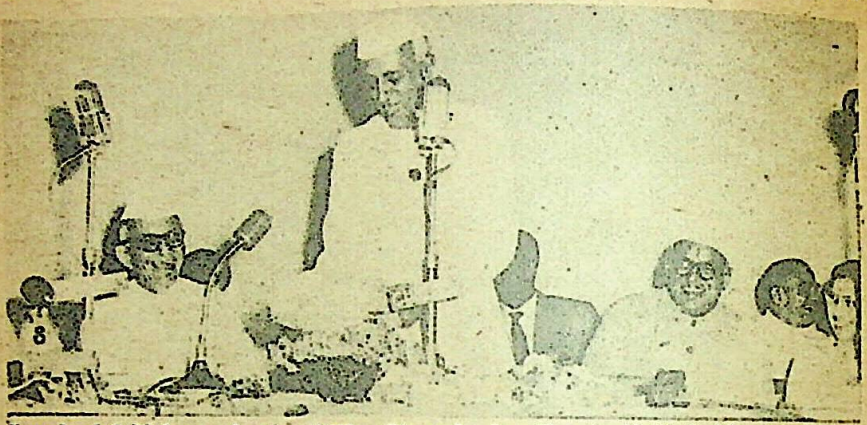

Jawaharlal Nehru releasing "The Struggle for Empire," Vol. V of Bhavan's prestigious 11-Volume "History and Culture of the Indian People" in Delhi in May 1957. (L. to R.): Kulapati Munshiji, Shri M. Ananthasayanam Iyengar, Jusice N. H. Bhagawati and Smt. Lilavati Munshi.

Builders of Modern India is to emulate their inspiring example in our respective spheres of life and work.

IV

You will all be very happy to know that the University of Bombay has prescribed *Indian Inheritance*, a Bhavan's publication, as a text book for B.A. Earlier this was prescribed by the Bangalore University also.

The inspiration for bringing out the much-applauded *Indian Inheritance* in three volumes—the first volume covering *Literature, Philosophy and Religion*: the second *Arts, History and Culture*, and the third *Science and Society*—came from none other than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who while foreseeing that India was on the threshold of entering an era of scientific and technological progress was equally keen that the people of India, especially the younger generation, should not lose their cultural moorings. He also extended financial help through the Government of India.

Much thought went into the preparation of the three volumes which have been designed with a view to generating in the readers not only an emotional awareness of India's culture, but also a spiritual kinship with our glorious heritage.

Sardar K. M. Panikkar, Prof. Humayun Kabir, Dr Radha Kamal Mukherjee, Prof. Abdul Majeed, Dr. A.D. Pusalkar and Dr. Asoke Majumdar helped the then General Editors of the Bhavan's publications, Kulapati K. M. Munshi and Justice N. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, in making the selections for these volumes.

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The selective genius of the editorial panel is very much evident in these three volumes which feature the mature writings of the master-minds of East and West, making a peep into our cultural past a most delightful and rewarding experience.

Indian culture is the eternal bedrock of India's life, of its purposeful past, its fateful present and its glorious future. A knowledge of the various aspects of this culture is therefore indispensable for our national growth.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had envisaged that a study of the *Indian Inheritance* series should serve as a "refresher course" on India's multi-faceted cultural heritage to Indians going abroad and also to the members of the Indian Administrative Service and Indian Foreign Service.

V

This issue of the *Bhavan's Journal* is appropriately dedicated to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi who has perhaps the distinction of being the "only prophet to be worshipped in his own country in his life-time and one of those very few politicians to be honoured outside their own shores."

I am reminded of the prophesey Rev. Deenabandhu C.F. Andrews made about Gandhiji in 1930: "Long after the names of the Viceroy and Governors who now reside in the palaces are forgotten, his name will be honoured and exalted among the people. The memory of Mahatma Gandhi will be handed down for ever to their children by all the mothers of India, as the memory of one of the greatest, a saint and a redeemer."

Indeed, in the religious, social, cultural and political shperes, the greatest event that happened in modern India, nay, modern world, was the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. Yet he is too near us in time to enable us to judge him from the perspective of history and human thought.

Gandhiji was a unique blend of a rebel and recluse, mendicant and mystic, apostle and prophet. The goal of all his activities, his ultimate aim in life, was to see God "face to face." It was as it were that "he removed the scale of materialism that was fast growing on the Indian mind and reached the raw flesh of religion." He was a living commentary of scriptures, be it the *Bhagavad Gita* or the *Bible*. Yes. He was spirituality in unselfish action.

Any real homage to Gandhiji should come by way of *action, unselfish action*, and not by way of frothy words and glittering functions.

Yours sincerely,

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

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GANDHIJI'S GREATEST LEGACY

S. Ramakrishnan

Mahatma Gandhi returned to India on January 9, 1915.

At that time, he was comparatively unknown and was nobody in the Indian public life.

The nation then abounded in stalwarts : Sri Aurobindo and Chittaranjan Das, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Motilal Nehru, Gopalakrishna Gokhale and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Sayyed Ahmad Khan and Mohamed Ali Jinnah, Bipinchandra Pal and Lajpat Rai, Phirozesha Mehta and Srinivasa Sastri, Vijayaraghavachariar and Srinivasa Ayyangar and a host of others in all parts of India.

How then did Gandhi climb the summit of Indian public life and become the supreme leader ? Storm the citadel of leadership?

The Mahatma was a humanist to the core.

His knowledge of India and the Indian people was profound.

He literally made men out of dust.

He practised self-introspection.

He was a man of prayer.

He was endowed with the "power" to touch the responsive chords in the hearts of men.

He believed that it was not given to any two individuals to agree on all points.

He was no dreamer living in some fantasy of his own creation, cut-off from life and its problems.

For all his rock-like adherence to certain principles, he adapted himself to others and adjusted himself to changing circumstances.

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He conceded that he may not always be right; that his opponents were not always wrong; that they also had many good qualities.

He held that harmonious and co-operative work did not rule out honest differences of opinion and approach.

He had the nobility to handsomely acknowledge the virtues of those who differed from him. He never snapped ties with them and what is more, he had the gift of harnessing their talents for the good of the nation, to bring up the buried treasure in each one, without breaking any.

He never forgot that his detractors were made of the same flesh and blood, and endowed with the same instincts and passions, hopes and aspirations. And that they did not belong to a different species of humanity.

He knew the art of differing without bitterness.

He had conquered fear—and hatred too.

He passionately believed that man was the true measure of everything.

These were the qualities that made him the Mahatma, the Leader of the Nation, nay, Father of the Nation.

These qualities constitute Gandhi's greatest legacy to us.

□□□

Be humble. Be forbearing. The British rule no doubt put you on your mettle. But now you will be tested through and through. Beware of power; power corrupts. Do not let yourselves be entrapped by its pomp and pageantry. Remember you are in office to serve the poor in India's villages. May God help you.

—Mahatma Gandhi
15th August 1947.

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The Essence of Hinduism

MAHATMA GANDHI

I HAVE come to the conclusion that if all the *Upanishads* and all the other scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes, and if only the first verse in the *Ishopanishad* were left intact in the memory of Hindus, Hinduism would live for ever.

Now this *mantra* divides itself in four parts. The first part is *Isaavaasyamidam Sarvam Yatkincha Jagatyam Jagat.* It means, as I would translate, all this that we see in this great Universe is pervaded by God. Then come the second and third parts which read together, as I read them: *tena tyaktena bhunjeethaa.* I divide these into two and translate them thus: Renounce it and enjoy it. There is another rendering which means the same as this, though: Enjoy what He gives you. Even so, you can divide it into two parts. Then follows the final and most important part, *Maa gridhah: kasyasviddhanam* which means:

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MIRACLE CURE

The turning point in the life of Devendranath Tagore, father of Rabindranath Tagore, was brought about by the first verse in the Ishopanishad.

Devendranath Tagore was in a mood of great depression when his father died, leaving the family estate highly encumbered.

One day, while he was in this mood, a piece of printed paper was wafted by a passing breeze to where he was sitting.

He picked it up. It was in Sanskrit which he had not learnt then. He took it to the family pandit who read it out. It was the first verse in the Ishopanishad.

The understanding of it not merely cured Devendranath of his depression but filled him with joy. He felt as though "Nectar poured into my soul."

Do not covet anybody's wealth or possession. All the other *mantras* of that ancient *Upanishad* are a commentary or an attempt to give us the full meaning of the first *mantra*.

As I read the *mantra* in the light of the *Gita* or the *Gita* in the light of the *mantra*, I find that the *Gita* is a commentary on this *mantra*. It seems to me to satisfy the cravings of the Socialist and the Communist, of the philosopher and the economist. I venture to suggest to all who do not belong to the Hindu faith that it satisfies their cravings also. And if it is true—and I hold it to be true—you need not take anything in Hinduism which is inconsistent with or contrary to the meaning of this *mantra*. What more can a man in the street want to learn than this that the one God and Creator and Master of all that lives pervades the Universe?

The three other parts of the *mantra* follow directly from the first. If you believe that God pervades everything that He has created, you must believe that you cannot enjoy anything that is not given by him. And seeing that He is the Creator of His numberless children, it follows that you cannot covet anybody's possession. If you think that you are one of His numerous creatures, it behoves you to renounce everything and lay it at His feet. That means that the act of renunciation of everything is not a mere physical renunciation, but represents a second or new birth. It is a deliberate act, not done in ignorance. It is, therefore, a regeneration. And then since he who holds the body must eat and drink and clothe himself, he must naturally, seek all that he needs from Him. And he gets it as a natural reward of that renunciation.

As if this was not enough, the *mantra* closes with this magnificent thought: 'Do not covet anybody's possession'. The moment you carry out these precepts you become a wise citizen of the world, living at peace with all that lives. It satisfies one's highest aspirations on this earth and hereafter. No doubt, it will not satisfy the aspiration of him who does not believe in God and His undisputed sovereignty. □ □ □

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When God Tested Gandhi

JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

IT WAS an hour before the evening prayer time. Bapu was going out for his usual stroll. He had hardly stepped out of the Ashram gate, when a visitor who was entering the Ashram stopped six paces in front of Bapu, placed on the ground a bundle of cloth, and reverentially made his *pranam*. Gandhiji returned the salutation and told the visitor that he had received his letter but he thought the visitor would await a reply before starting for the Ashram. "I know I should have waited for your permission to come to the Ashram, but somehow I could not restrain myself, and so I left Hardwar to come to you". Bapu explained to him that he knew the disease he was suffering from, and he had been debating within himself whether it would be proper for him to let him come and reside in the Ashram where so many persons, women, children and the sick lived in close proximity.

The visitor was none other than Parchure Shastri, a fellow-prisoner with Gandhiji in Yeravada Jail in 1922. He had unfortunately developed leprosy of a bad type, and had since his release been wandering from hospital to hospital for effective treatment and had ultimately found refuge at Hardwar. Realising Bapu's difficulty the visitor said: "I have had your *darshan*. This bundle contains the yarn I spun at Hardwar to give you personally one day. My purpose is served. I will pass the night under yonder tree and return to Hardwar in the morning." Bapu asked him whether he had had any food, and on learning that he had nothing since the day meal, he asked Kanu Gandhi to arrange to feed him. The evening prayer soon followed; and before long, his head massage

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being over, Gandhiji rested for the night.

The body rested. The brain also almost rested. But the soul of this great man was up in revolt within him. The subconscious Gandhi was fighting his way through the calculative working of the conscious mind. The battle, silent and unseen, raged intensely for several hours. At last the great Soul won the struggle. The outer sleep broke at about 2 a.m. and Bapu sat up to make the conscious mind respond to the call of the inner self. There was no peace for him till that response came. And with the response he saw light and knew his next step.

The morning prayer over, he addressed the inmates of his Ashram gathered on the prayer ground at that early hour. He put before them all the aspects of the problem which had faced him on the previous evening. He told them how God in the form of Parchure Shastri had come to test his sincerity. For him to turn away Parchure because of his leprosy would be to deny himself and God, but he was at the same time responsible for the health of the Ashramites whom God had placed in his charge. How could he let Parchure live in their proximity unless they all were prepared to run the risk involved? The Ashramites rose to the occasion, and made it clear that they were

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ready to receive Parchure in their midst. The load was off Bapu's breast. One more experiment with truth, and one more manifestation of *ahimsa* in its positive form of love to all, even the lowliest, even to one whom the "untouchables" would not touch—this was the meaning of what had happened.

With the dawn Parchure became the inmate of the Ashram. A neat cottage was hurriedly put up close to Bapu's own. The roof consisted of a plain sheet of white khadi to permit the sun to play its part in the treatment of the new patient. From that day no single individual in the Ashram occupied the mind of Bapu more than Parchure. It was a time when grave issues faced the country. But in the midst of this all, the leprous wounds of Parchure Shastri loomed large in the mind of the great soul. He massaged him daily with his own hands till some Ashramites voluntarily relieved him of his duty. He determined the diet the patient was to receive, and so the food served out to Parchure was brought to Bapu for inspection three times each day. The end of the morning walk found Bapu every day at Parchure's hut. Affectionate enquiries about the patient's progress, a few suggestions about the daily routine, attentive sympathetic listening to the Sanskrit poems composed by this learned leper, a smile and a parting joke, all this made Bapu pass more time with Parchure Shastri than with any of his other patients whom he used to cheer by brief daily visits.

And so this next neighbour of Bapu prospered rapidly, as in poetic riches, so in health. The two days he had wanted to be near Bapu lengthened into two months and in due course to more than two years. Bapu would not let him leave his side till the disease was controlled and cured.

They say that mind affects the body. And so the state of the mind has something to do with the cure of disease. And how could not the ocean of affection in which Parchure swam but affect his mind and so the leprous limbs of his diseased body?

It was one of his silence days. Bapu listened to him with an affectionate smile as he poured out his thoughts in a rapid stream. But how could Bapu respond to him with his loving enquiries and jokes? What could not flow from him in words, to which Parchure had become accustomed, did yet flow to the convalescent patient. And how? Bapu with his remarkable forethought, born of *ahimsa*, had brought with him a fresh orange. Lovingly he gave it to Parchure in token of his affection since his lips could on that day utter no cheering words! You could see how the patient's eyes brightened and the face lit up with pleasure at this unexpected outflow of love. He understood the language of this silent act.

□ □ □

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PRAYER

As Gandhiji Viewed It

I AM not a man of learning, but I humbly claim to be a man of prayer.

Three of the greatest teachers of the world, Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed, have left unimpeachable testimony that they found illumination through prayer and could not possibly live without it.

Our physical health suffers if we do not wash our bodies; similarly the spirit becomes unclean if the heart is not washed with prayer. Please therefore never be negligent in prayer.

Prayer is the only mans of bringing about orderliness and peace and response in our daily acts.

Prayer is the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening.

Works without faith and prayer are like artificial flowers without fragrance.

Worship and prayer are not to be performed with the lips but with the heart.

The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world.

My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray.

God never answers prayers of the arrogant, nor the prayers of those who bargain with Him.

Food for the body is not so necessary as prayer for the soul. For starvation is often necessary in order to keep the body in health, but there is no such thing as prayer starvation. You cannot possibly have a surfeit of prayer.

Prayer is a confession of one's own unworthiness and weakness.

Prayer is not an asking; it is a longing of the soul.

Prayer is the first and the last lesson in learning the noble and brave art of sacrificing self.

Without prayer there is no inward peace.

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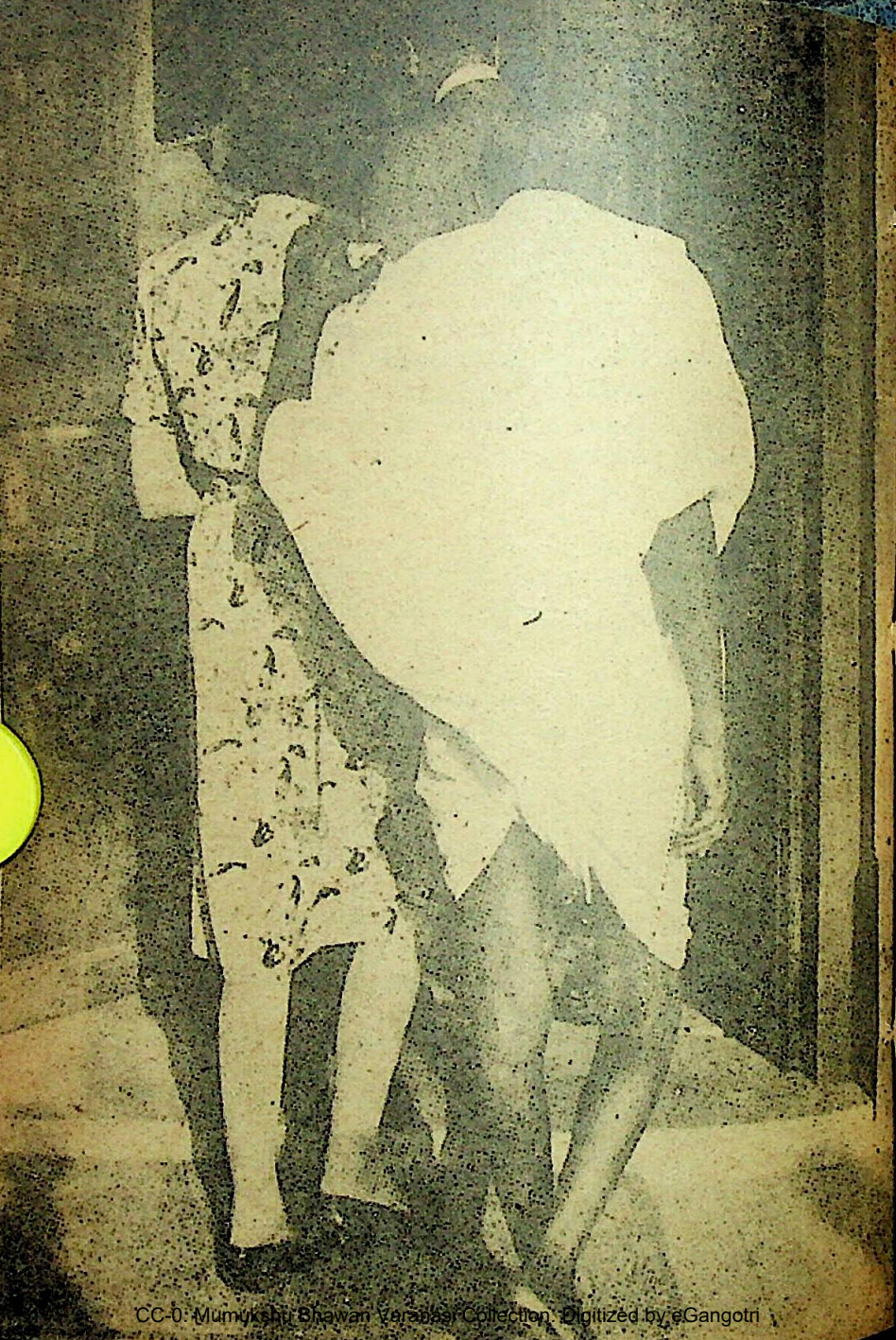

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At Gandhiji's funeral, Lady Mountbatten wept unabashedly —she just could not help it. Gandhiji was the man who had the greatest influence on her. She had seen him in his many moods—happy, gay, merry, serious, sad—every one of which made him lovable.—Ed.

How Gandhiji Charmed Lady Mountbatten

S. Durai Raja Singam

DISCUSSING the influence that people have on one another, Lady Mountbatten once confided to her biographer, Madeleine Masson, "I think that perhaps Gandhi had the greatest influence on me."

Lady Mountbatten first went to India in 1921, where the young Mountbatten was acting as A.D.C. to his cousin the Prince of Wales on his tour of the sub-continent.

The name of Gandhiji then conveyed little to this young, pretty heiress, whose lavish parties in London were soon to become the talk of the town. He was just an "unruly old personage"—"no mysterious voices told her that 25 years later she and Dickie would, for a brief while, become the chief protagonists in the drama which was to bring down the curtain on the British Raj."

Twentyfive years after their engagement they were in India together again on a mission that was to affect the destiny of India and Asia. On the day of their 25th wedding anniversary they held an Investiture, the last Imperial Investiture, in the Durbar Hall in Delhi. Presents and messages of congratulation came to them from all parts of the world, but among the letters treasured most by Lady Mountbatten was a note from Gandhiji:

Dear Sister,

So you are celebrating the silver jubilee of your wedding amid a shower of congratulations and good wishes. Let me add mine to them. I hope that your joint career here will blossom into citizenship of the world. I hope your daughter is fully recovered.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi.

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One of the most famous photos ever taken of Gandhiji shows him entering the study of the Viceroy in Delhi with his hand on the shoulder of Lady Mountbatten, the last Vicerine. It was taken in 1947 by the brilliant photographer Max Desfors, of Associated Press of America. Madeleine Masson, in her biography of Lady Mountbatten, describes how it came to be taken:

"Early in the afternoon of March 31st the Moghul Gardens outside Lord Louis' study were packed with pressmen and photographers. In the dark, air-cooled study a momentuous meeting was taking place. Mahatma Gandhi was paying his first call on the Viceroy and Vicerine before beginning his series of political interviews with Lord Mountbatten.

"After a brief interval the waiting cameramen saw Gandhi, escorted by the Mountbattens, coming out to them. The impressive old man in whom beat the heart of India was in excellent humour. Obediently he posed, his toothless gums stretched in a benevolent smile. The whiteness of his clothes was dazzling in the brilliant sunlight. One man stood apart from the rush of agitated cameramen. This was Max Desfors, the Associated Press of America photographer. As Gandhi turned, to return to the study, he placed his hand on Edwina's shoulder. The shutter of Desfors' camera clicked. He had secured an historic picture. Indians seeing this photograph in their papers immediately understood its immense significance. The Mahatma by this gesture was offering the Mountbattens spontaneous friendship."

"Latter in the study again," Miss Masson tells us, "Edwina sat listening to the sage describing his early life and experience in South Africa. For an hour and a quarter she listened to the gentle lisping voice, which for more than half a century had been preaching Satyagraha (truth force) and practising desirelessness.

Wisdom from East

"Thinking back on some of the subjects he discussed, she remembered that he had said that originally the West had received its wisdom from the East: Zoroaster, Moses, Jesus, Mohamed, Krishna, Rama, and lesser lights. He said, too, that the message of Asia was not to be learned through Western spectacles or through the atomic bomb. The message of the West must be the message of love and the message of truth. When Edwina rose to leave her husband and Gandhi to begin their political discussion she felt something of the regard and veneration which touched all those who approached the Mahatma."

This meeting was the beginning of a great spiritual affinity between the two extremely contrasted personalities—on the one hand the aristocratic and cultured millionai-

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ress, accustomed all her life to moving in the highest circles of Western society, who had dedicated herself to the work of social betterment and alleviation of suffering in Asia and Europe; and on the other, the gentle ascetic, the apostle of non-violence whose frugality of living was known throughout the world and whose material possessions came to no more than a few rupees.

One day in July 1947 Mahatmaji was visited by Lady Mountbatten in his Bhangi colony, the first of many such visits.

Ugly Yet Beautiful

"For three quarters of an hour she sat on the floor of his little room having a wide discussion on many matters," writes Miss Masson. "She watched him spinning, and marvelled at the dexterity and beauty of his big, smooth hands. From him radiated gentleness and firmness. He was old, he was ugly, and his eyes behind his gold-rimmed bifocals he wore were wise and profoundly sad. But his laugh was merry and young. There was friendship between 'Bapu' and Edwina Mountbatten."

"Mahatma Gandhi has shown so much courtesy in coming here for many talks with my husband, in spite of his great age and so often at great inconvenience to himself, and we have all three become such friends, that I felt the least I could do was to pay him a courtesy call at his own home," wrote Lady Mountbatten afterwards. I spent a most interesting three-quarters of an hour with him sitting on the floor of his little room and having a wide discussion on many matters."

Edwina Mountbatten, as Denis Holman tells us in his "Life" of this great and remarkable Englishwoman, grew "extremely fond of that whimsical and lovable old saint-politician, with his steel-rimmed spectacles and the battered timepiece he carried at his waist. From the first she had been touched by the manner in which he appeared to accept them as if they had been old friends."

She visited him many times at the Bhangi Colony, o: Birla House, to ask his advice, and as she wrote later, "I always came away strengthened and soothed."

Wedding Gift

Apart from his wisdom, writes Dennis Holman, Lady Mountbatten "found the great leader amusing and gay and quite irresistibly charming. He was also considerate and thoughtful; when their nephew became engaged to be married to Princess Elizabeth it was Gandhiji who first sent the Mountbattens and the young couple his best wishes."

Gandhiji's warm humanity, illustrated in so many ways on a great scale when dealing with human misfortunates and wretchedness, was also expressed in small gestures to his friends. He remembered their birthdays and anniversaries, or any kindnesses

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they had shown him. There was symbolism as well as sentiment in his present to Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip on their wedding day—it was a small piece of lace cloth woven from yarn he had spun, and was taken to Buckingham Palace by Lady Mountbatten.

On Gandhi's 78th birthday Lady Mountbatten went to congratulate him, but she found that the aftermath of partition had left him sad.

"Where do congratulations come in?" he asked her. "Would it not be more appropriate to send condolences? There is nothing but anguish in my heart. Time was whatever I said the masses followed. Today, mine is a lone voice ... I have lost all desire to live long, let alone 125 years ... I cannot live while hatred and killing mar the atmosphere."

Lady Mountbatten knew Gandhiji in all his varying moods—happy, gay, merry, serious, sad. He knew that her individual purpose in India, as Vicerine, was to improve the atmosphere, to cultivate goodwill, and he helped her in his. It was through Gandhiji that such a tough opponent of the British, Mrs. Asaf Ali, well-known for her socialist views, was eventually prevailed upon to meet Lady Mountbatten.

"A courteous invitation was despatched to her," Miss Masson writes. "This was courteously but firmly declined. *Impasse*. Edwina wondered what her next move

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should be. She did not have long to wait. Gandhi came to talk with Lord Louis. With him was Mrs. Asaf Ali.

" 'I heard she wouldn't come,' he said, 'so I brought her with me.' "

Lord Mountbatten did not accompany her on any of her visits to Gandhiji—except during his last fast, the "all-in fast" to death, undertaken as an act of contrition for the riots that followed partition. Protocol did not permit the Viceroy to pay such a visit, but as this fast progressed, and the Mahatma became exceedingly weak, the Viceroy felt great concern and accompanied his wife to Birla House where Gandhiji lay on a cot in an enclosed porch.

She Wept

"A white khadi cloth framed his face," writes Miss Masson. "All day long queues filed past the still figure. Many wept, all bowed their heads in humility and love... He was weak, his voice a thin thread. With a flash of humour he said to Lord Louis, 'It takes a fast to bring the mountain to Mahomet,' and rallied sufficiently to have a discussion on the possibilities of breaking it."

For Lady Mountbatten his death was an irreparable loss, and she wept at his funeral.

"She felt that they had lost a real friend and wise counseller, as a world leader and supreme force for good and justice," wrote her biographer.

In her farewell broadcast to the people of India, on June 19, this distinguished Englishwoman referred to Gandhiji's death as the nation's greatest calamity, which had numbed the whole country and the entire world and made her saddened and downcast.

There were many qualities in the Mahatma which attracted the gifted, charming and sophisticated Lady Mountbatten to him, not the least his moral courage. Often during the 18 memorable months she witnessed and took part in the ceremonies culminating in the birth of independent India, she was concerned for his safety. She urged him to be more careful, but his characteristic reply was, "God gave me life. Only He can withhold it." These were last words she was to hear him speak, for soon afterwards he was assassinated. □ □ □

WORRY

There is nothing that wastes the body like worry, and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever.

But to ensure absolute freedom from worry requires a living utter faith which is a plant of slow, almost unperceived, growth and requires to be constantly watered by tears that accompany genuine prayer.

Why worry one's head over a thing that is inevitable? Why die before one's death?

—Mahatma Gandhi

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3

Vaakya Vritti

Of Adi Sankaracharya

SWAMI
CHINMAYANANDA

Yasya Prasaadaad-Aham-Eva
Vishnur-Mayya-iva Sarvam
Parikalpitam Ca,
Itttham Vijaanaami Sadaatma-
roopam
Tasya-anghri-Padam Pranato-smi
Nityam (2)

(2) Continuously do I prostrate at the lotus-feet of my Lord, by whose grace I have come to know forever that I am the All-pervading Vishnu, and that the entire universe of names and forms are superimposed upon Me alone.

The inner shackles of personality are all destroyed and the freedom of the Soul is gained, only on discovering our total identification with the Infinite Self in us. Yet, this Self-rediscovery cannot happen by accident, nor can anyone discover it as a result of one's own intellectual efforts. We are to be guided to it by a teacher, who had been led to this experience earlier by the grace of his own teacher. Sankara dedicates this verse to express his sincere gratitude and utter devotion to his teacher who guided him into this vast experience of the dimensionless State of the Self.

He is the Lord, by whose grace the limited ego has come to experience its total identity with the All-pervading Self, the *Vishnu*. In the Puranas, Vyasa uses the term *Vishnu* to denote *Lord Narayana*, the Sustainer of the Sustainer of the universe of beings. The term was already in the Vedic

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lore, where it meant "All-pervading."

Not only that an awakened soul realises the nature of the Self, but he also recognises that the world-of-plurality is an illusory superimposition upon the Essential Self. To the one who guided me from my misunderstandings of my Self and from my illusory world of finite things and beings, by awakening me into the Higher Truth, to that teacher I am ever indebted and I salute him again for all times to come, daily, continuously (*Nityam*)

After thus prostrating to the Infinite Reality and to the teacher who guided him to the Supreme, the author begins this short but significant text expounding the deep significance of the great Upanishadic Commandments (*Maha-Vakyas*)

In order to give a dramatic setting for this great discussion, Acharya Sankara builds up an occasion for a dialogue between a fully prepared student and a divinely mystical teacher. The qualities of a perfect student and the nature of his mental condition are brilliantly brought out in the following verse:

Taapa-Traya-Arka-Santaptah
Kashcid-Udvigna-Maanasah.
Sama-Aadi-Saadhanair-Yuktah
Sadgurum Paripricchati (3)

(3) A certain person baked by the sun of the three miseries, with his mind extremely anxious, who is endowed with self-control and such other virtues, enquires of a great teacher.

Until man realises the miseries and the sorrows of a situation, he will never revolt against it and seek to redeem himself into a better state of existence. Realisation of the imperfections is the unavoidable precondition before man makes any struggle to improve his present sad conditions. Only when we realise that we are ill do we seek health. Thus, in all the spiritual literature the first attempt of the teacher is to make the student poignantly aware of the state of imperfections in which he is at present condemned to live. When the student has fully realised the tyranny of the destitution in which he is now living, he starts his search for the ways and means to liberate himself from the cruel clutches of his existing tragic circumstances.

In the description of the perfect student, Sankara, therefore, very deliberately points out that he alone is a real disciple, who has realised that "he is being baked by the scorching pangs of the three miseries". All the possible miseries of life have been classified by the Hindu Rishis under three heads, according to the source from which they emanate. There are sufferings and sorrows that reach us from sources unknown (*Adhi-daivika*); from sources that are cosmic and therefore, known (*Adhi-bhautika*); and from sources which are calamitous distur-

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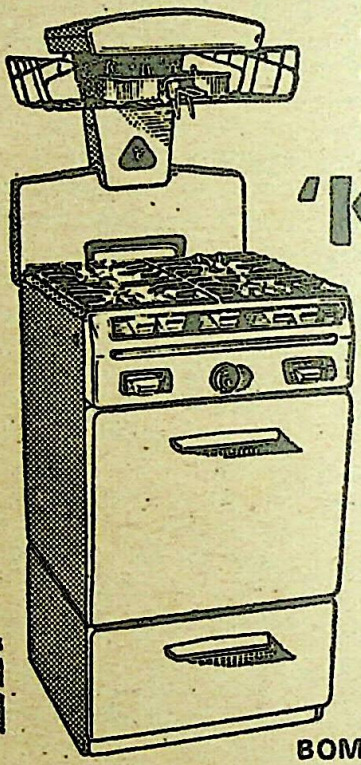

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bances arising subjectively (*Adhyatmika*). These are the three sources from which spring man's day-to-day tragedies in life. To be continuously aware of all these miseries from the triple sources is to stir up our inner personality and to unveil a mental preparedness in us to seek for ourselves a great existence.

At this stage, of the seeker's full awareness of man's helpless state, he becomes anxious to seek and search for a larger meaning for life and a more purposeful way of living. Such a student, when he cultivates in himself a certain amount of self-control both in the actions of his sense-organs and in the play of his mind, becomes a fit student for spiritual study, and for the search of the Higher. Such a deserving student approaches, here in the text-book, his teacher and questions the master.

Without cultivation of such a spiritual predisposition, a student is not fit to enter the realm of study and practice of the nobler and diviner life.

Sishya Uvaaca

Anaayaasena Yena-Asmaan-
Mucyeyam Bhava-Bandha-
naat, Tan-Me Samkshipya
Bhagavan-Kevalam Kripayaa
Vada (4)

The Disciple said:

(4) "Revered Sir, purely out of your mercy, please explain to me briefly the path by which I may be easily liberated from the bondages of the limited existence."

With this simple but direct verse the student requests the teacher to explain to him the means by which he could liberate himself from the endless entanglements which he is experiencing in his existence in the time—space—field. The bondages of the limited existence (*Bhava-Bandhan*) are so painful to the student that he becomes impatient and requests the teacher a way by which he could discover readily (*Anaayaasena*) a total freedom from them.

The student in all his humility feels that he has no right in himself to demand of the teacher such an explanation. He, therefore, indicates that the teacher give this knowledge to him solely out of the teacher's own infinite mercy. The student feels that he has no right to compel the teacher to give him this wisdom. He depends upon the sympathy, love and mercy of the teacher (*Kevalam Kripaya*).

Gurur Uvaaca:

Saadhvee-The Vacana-Vyaktih
Pratibhaati
Vadaami Ta, Idam Tad-Iti
Vispastam
Saavadhaana-Manaah Srunu (5)

The Teacher said:

(5) This your question sounds appropriate to me. I shall, therefore answer it, making it extremely clear (as clear as saying this-is-that). Listen to me with an all alert mind.

From the question of the student

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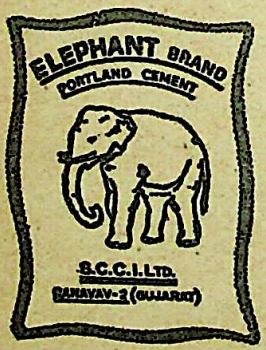

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the teacher understands the mental confusion and the intellectual ability of the seeker. Having judged him to be a bright student the teacher promises to explain to him the Supreme Truth as clearly as possible.

We generally use the pronoun 'this' (*Idam*) to indicate something very near and that, (Tat) to point out something far off. Explanations are needed in study only when the student is not able to comprehend an idea. The unknown is considered as far (*Tat*) and to bring the unknown to the category of the known is the function of education.

The teacher, therefore, promises that he will try to explain the Truth as vividly as possible so that the student may come to recognise *that*, which is now beyond his comprehension, to be *this*, the knowledge apprehended (*Idam-Tad-Iti*)

The teacher indicates that even though he may try to explain it clearly and vividly, it being a subjective science, the responsibility must rest entirely upon the student to visualise and experience that which is expressed by the teacher. For this, the student must have an extreme alertness of attention. If his thoughts are wandering and dissipating, the real subjective significance of the subtle words of the teacher will be lost on the student, and therefore, the teacher here emphasises that he should listen to the discourse with an all-alert mind...a quiet, vigilant and hushed mind. Without such a total participation of the student's mind, communication of the spiritual science will become completely ineffectual and totally barren.

□ □ □

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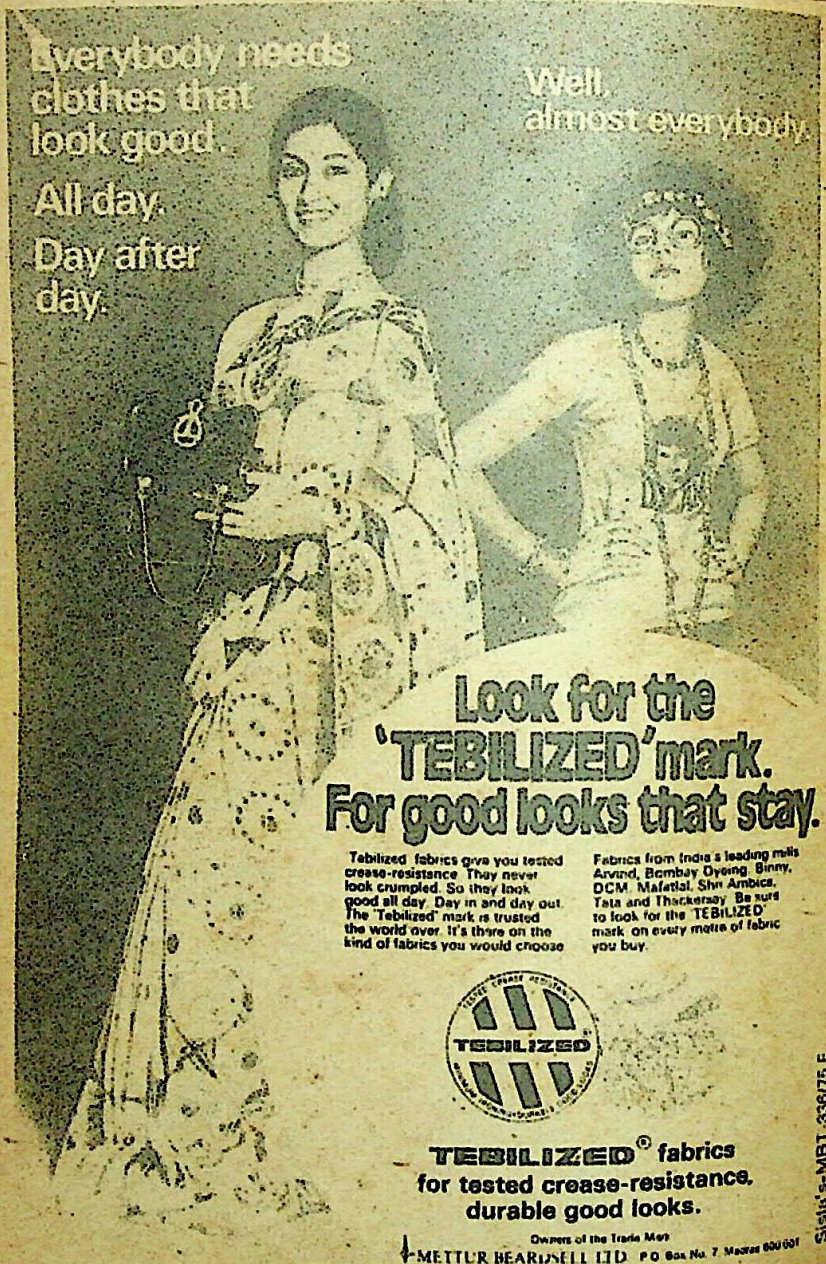

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HANUMAN

SUSHEELA MISHRA

ONE of the many impressive characters in any version of Ramayana is Hanuman, "the perfect servant, loyal, courteous, strong, intelligent, discriminating, bold, frank, resourceful, quick, and tactful,—one who accomplished so much and was yet utterly devoid of vanity." "Humility and self-effacement were his hall marks," and the story of his utter devotion to Sri Rama (*Rama-bhakti*) will be cherished till the end of this world.

Before his meeting with Sri Rama, Hanuman had been the devoted servant (minister) of Sugreeva whom he had served with selfless devotion even when the former was living in exile, bereft of his kingdom, wife and honour. In the *Saarakanda* of Anandaramayana, Sri Rama expresses his surprise regarding Hanuman to Sage Agasthya in the following words:—

"Hanuman's valour and strength equal the powerful Bali's. And

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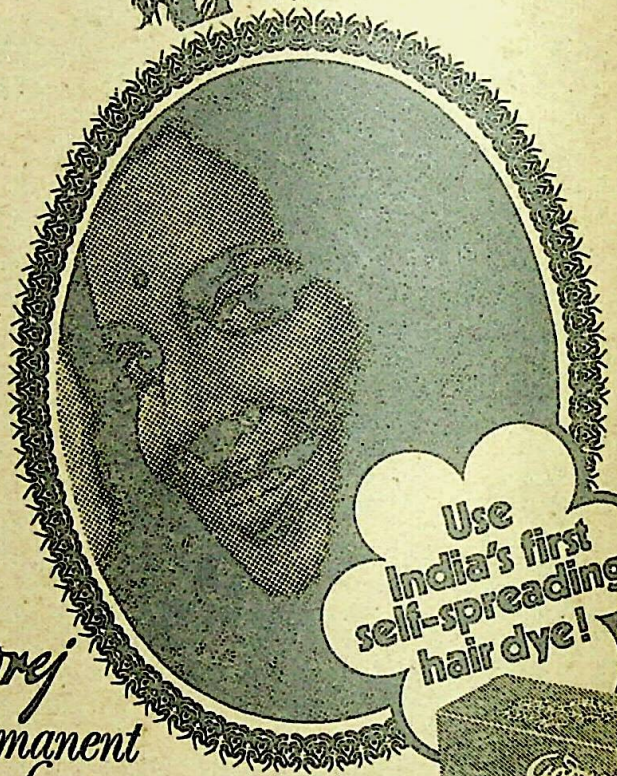

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yet he is content to remain a loyal minister of Sugreeva, the exiled king! Why?"

Maharshi Agasthya narrates the early story of Hanuman to Sri Rama:—

"One upon a time, a famous Vaanara named Kesari lived on Mount Anjana with his two wives, Anjani and Marjaramukhi (the cat-faced one). One day as Anjani was sitting on the mountain-top all alone, a female eagle happened to fly overhead. Some sacred sweetened rice (paayasam) fell out of her beak. In fact, the "paayasam" was a portion of what Kaikeyi had thrown away after she had consumed her share from the *Putrakaameshti-yagna*. The Wind God (Vayu) dallied with the beautiful Anjana just after she consumed the Sacred rice; so she conceived! On the Full Moon day in the month of Chaitra, her son was born. He was an extraordinary boy. Mistaking the red orb of the Sun for a ripe fruit, he leapt up into the sky with the speed of wind (being the son of Vaayu) to swallow it. As this was during a solar eclipse, Rahu was preparing to swallow the sun as per his understanding with Indra; but the sight of the leaping boy sacred him away. He went sulking to Indra and complained:—

"It was at your special request that I spared the Sun and agreed to consume him only during Grahan (solar eclipse). Today I have been deprived of my rare meal by that young fellow; I am, therefore, going to swallow you."

Devendra lost no time. He mounted his Airawata (white elephant) and sped to the trouble spot, where baby Hanuman was about to swallow the globe of the Sun. To avert this, Indra hurled his powerful diamond-hard Vajrayudha which felled Hanuman into the depths of a cavernous cave. The weapon struck him on the chin, breaking his chin-bode,—hence he became "Hanuman", "the one with the broken chin."

The Wind-God was so upset and grieved over the tragedy which befell his son, that he sat near the little one, with-holding "vayu" (air) from all the 3 worlds. Deprived of air, living beings began to perish in all the words. In deep concern, Brahma hastened to the Wind God and apologised on behalf of the rash Indra:—

"Devendra did you a grievous wrong. But I shall compensate for it by bestowing special boons on your son:—"Hanuman will be blest with everlasting Bhakti for Lord Vishnu, for which he will be revered and worshipped for ever. He will be fortunate enough to render great help to Vishnu in His incarnation as Sri Rama. No one will be an obstacle in his path in all the 3 worlds."

Thus pacified, the Wind God released air so that living beings might continue to breathe and live.

Blessed with the boons from Brahma, Hanuman grew up from strength to strength. He was full of mischief and childish pranks

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like any other boy. One day as he was roaming about in the various Ashramas of Maharishis, he felt a mischievous urge to scatter the neatly-piled stacks of grass and hay, and to scare away the young lads living in the hermitages. This enraged the Maharishis who cursed him:—"From now on, you will be unaware of your own strength". Subsequently, they relented and modified the curse:—"You will suddenly realize your potentialities when some day some great person will recount your early life-story, and then you will become mightier than ever".

Thus Hanuman grew up unaware of his extraordinary strength. Later on, during the search for Seeta, everyone was feeling dejected, and Hanuman also was feeling most diffident about crossing the vast ocean to reach Lanka. At this juncture, Jambavan narrated the entire early story of Hanuman's life and extolled his great strength. As foretold, Hanuman regained full confidence in his own strength, and then he did not hesitate a moment to take the big leap across to distant Lanka.

At one stage in the fierce battle in Lanka between the forces of Rama and Ravana both Rama and Lakshmana were kidnapped and taken away into the netherworld by Ravana's cunning allies, Ahiravana and Mahiravana. When Hanuman went there to look for Rama and Lakshmana, he was confronted by a young watchman named Makaradhwaja. As soon as the latter heard the visitor was Rama's envoy, the first question he asked was "Can you give me any information regarding my father Hanuman?"

To say that Hanuman was *startled* by this unexpected relationship would be an understatement ,for Hanuman, the idol of Brahmacharis, had always been noted for his celebacy! Makaradhwaja enlightened Hanuman about the strange story of his birth:

On his first visit to Lanka, Hanuman had set fire to the city using his flaming tail as a torch. When most of Lanka had been reduced to ashes, he went near the Ocean and dipped his blazing tail

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in the cool waters to extinguish the flames. As he did so, some drops of moisture fell into the waters from the fumes. These drops were swallowed by a female fish, and that was enough to impregnate her! In course of time, she gave birth to Makaradhwaja who was brought up in the Netherworld.

Naturally, Makaradhwaja helped Hanuman to rescue Rama and Lakshmana from the clutches of Ahi and Mahi-Ravanas. Hiding behind an idol of Kali, Hanuman duped the rakshasas by speaking in a divinely soft voice and demanding all the drinks and edible things in the underworld. With the help of a serpent-maiden, he succeeded in annihilating the rakshasas.

During the Coronation-celebrations, Sri Rama gave Seeta a beautiful jewelled necklace which Seeta, in her turn, presented to Hanuman in appreciation of his selfless services. When Sri Rama asked him what reward he wished to have, Hanuman said spontaneously:—"As long as your name lasts in the world (i.e. for eternity), please bless me to live on, so that wherever your story is recited I may sit and listen. I want nothing but eternal devotion to you, my Lord!"

Seeta blessed him:—"Oh noble Vaayuputra! You will be happy and honoured wherever you go. Everywhere, men will adore you and seek your help for removing obstacles and destroying evil spirits." □ □ □

"Whatever you do, devote your whole mind, heart, and soul to it. I once met a great Sannyasin, who cleansed his brass cooking utensils, making them shine like gold, with as much care and attention as he bestowed on his worship and meditation"

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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What is Ramayana to Me

21

DR. VISWANATHA SATHYANARAYANA

WHILE discussing religion in Valmiki's *Ramayana*, one cannot set aside the aspect of devotion, Bhakti, which has gradually grown to immeasurable heights and seems to have gained ascendancy over some other more important paths of self-realisation.

Before discussing what is devotion and what is its place either in a religious mould or in the building of *Rasa* in a *Kavya*, one must exactly know what our great authors mean by this Bhakti. It is only during the time of Vyasa, the author of 18 *Puranas* and the great *Kavya, Mahabharata*, that a majority of these terms either of religion or of religious growth have come to be clearly enunciated or explained.

In the *Bhagavata*, Bhakti is at many places mentioned as the final path to salvation. But in the *Bhagavad Gita*, it is not so. In the *Gita*, only two paths are mentioned. They are called Yogas. The first is Karma Yoga, the second Jnana Yoga.

But in the *Bhagavata*, written by the same author, particularly in the tenth *skandha*, Bhakti is made to assume large proportions and, at some places, is declared to be the only one solution for salvation. Lord Krishna while speaking to Akrura says that Bhakti is the only path that leads the *jiva* to emancipation. The Lord while speaking to Akrura also defines Bhakti.

What exactly does the Lord mean by Bhakti? He has explain-

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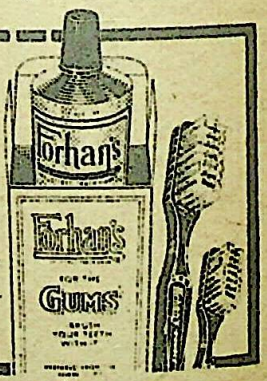

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ed it Himself. Uniting the three – word, deed and heart—one must first think of the Lord. In addition, one should also sing His praises.

It is said that there are 10 ways in this branch of devotion—to be friendly with God, to be always hearing the stories about the Lord, to be a slave to the Lord, doing obeisance continuously and to worship Him unceasingly, to attend upon Him as a loyal servant, to be completely aware of the real essence of God, to be singing of His deeds, His prowess and to be thinking about Him, and to sink into the original nature of oneself. The question remains if the 10 paths are different from one another.

At some other place, in the *Bhagavata*, it is said that this Bhakti is nothing but the highest concentration about the Lord and two or three adjectives are added to the word concentration, heightening the intensity of concentration. The word that is used there is *Dhyana*. *Dhyana* is nothing but unceasing remembrance of the Lord. It should be continuous like the stream of oil that is poured from one vessel to another. The oil is chosen to suggest the density of the thought.

This continuous thinking about the Lord which is intense and also dense is the real state in which a devotee should find himself fixed. If such a state is attained, it matters little what kind of approach you make towards the Lord. Even there, in the *Bhagavata*, different instances are given of devotees reaching God through different approaches. The Gopikas, the shepherd women, realised Him through erotic love; Kamsa, the demon, through fear. Sisupala through his animosity towards the Lord; the Vrishni race through their relationship. Anybody can reach the Lord if that *Dhyana* reaches its maximum limit. How?

There is an explanation behind. Anger, hatred, erotic love, friendship and any other worldly feeling of the senses are taking shape because of the mental working. The mind has a resemblance of *chaitanya*. This *chaitanya* does not belong to the mind. It is acquired from a higher source. And so when these passions have assumed the highest magnitude, they become one with that great spiritual power which is nothing but another form of the Lord. It is with such abandon and intensity one should think of the Lord to yield fruitfulness.

Now coming to the *Ramayana*, one is tempted by the already enumerated principles of devotion to see who is a devotee in the *Ramayana*. The art of the organic structure makes the author sometimes, if he happens to be a genius, pass to heights beyond one's understanding. To the common eye, things may appear to be very common. Every character will be portrayed by the author as having an attitude of his own. But some-

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times, with an author whose art is deeper than the conventional attitudinising, there will be a deep man. The depth of that man is something different.

In the *Ramayana*, there are many characters. The hero is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Even in common life, a man with exceeding intelligence and high potentiality of mind is being recognised as possessing a quality of God by almost all people who come into contact with him. And Rama being God himself, though the story moves on and every character has his own role, there is the possibility of every character understanding Rama in his own way. Perhaps every one of them knows Sri Rama to be the Lord. Every man has his own approach towards the Lord. Guha and Sabari are said to be great devotees. And which of the characters in the *Ramayana* is not a devotee? This Bhakti is all-comprehensive. Everybody is a devotee. Their paths are different. If, in the attitude of the individual, such abandon and intensity are seen, he is a very good devotee who achieves salvation in his own way.

Vibhishana and Sabari are two characters in the *Ramayana* who can be quoted as real devotees, because we think of devotion in a particular way. Vibhishana quarelled with his brother. He left his brother. He came to the side of Rama. It seems to be politics but Vibhishana is known to be a very great devotee. His name is frequently mentioned in the list of the great devotees. In a very well established Ramayana commentary which advocates the cult of Vaishnavism, the approach of Vibhishana to Rama is interpreted to be the ideal of devotion.

Sabari remains. From the stand point of construction of the story, Sabari has no place. Perhaps she comes into the story simply as a relief to Rama when he was so despondent. The story of Sabari is construed in a hundred ways by a hundred people. All interpretations are different from what is written by Valmiki.

As the attitude of devotion developed in India, a peculiar change made its appearance. It has its source in Samkhya philosophy. But it is different from Samkhya. In Samkhya, the great *chaitanya* is *Purusha*. And that which is not *Purusha* is *Prakriti* which is inanimate. But this new strain of devotion divides *chaitanya* into two. In the *Dwaita* philosophy, the Lord is the Lord. The other *jivas* are not one with the *Lord*.

The Lord is *Purusha*, the other *jivas* are women. If a soul or a community of souls pine for the Lord, all these souls are women and the Lord is the man. The erotic sentiment is brought to play in this way. The Chaitanya school of the north, the seed of which was sown in the South by some great Alwars, has developed

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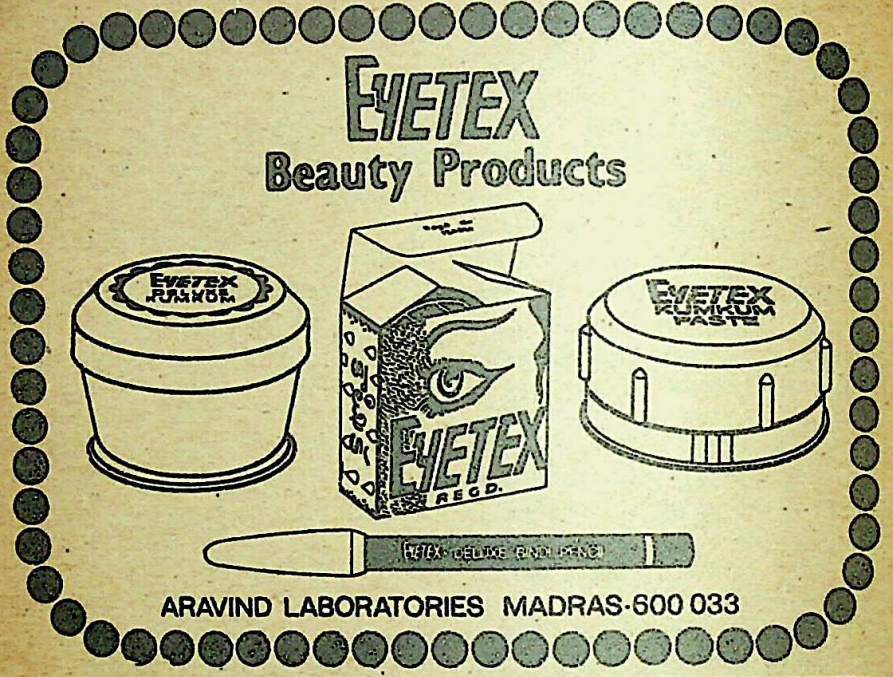

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a very peculiar philosophy of its own. Sabari seems to be the source for this kind of dilation in this divine erotic philosophy. Valmiki's text does not warrant this. Valmiki's Sabari is painted in light and shade. There is no difiniteness in Valmiki's Sabari. She was asked by Mathanga, the sage, her guru, to wait for Rama, more to play the host. She did it and then left Rama to meet the sage in the other worlds. This is the exact position. Rama might be a God or not. She did not expect salvation from Rama.

Now, this phase of devotion is different in different characters in the *Ramayana*. Dasaratha is a devotee by himself. He is the father. He died, unable to withstand the feeling of separation from Rama. This might have happened to some other father also. But Rama is the Lord. Here lies the difference. The same sentiment extended to a mortal is nothing, but when extended to God becomes Bhakti.

In the *Ramayana*, this phase of devotion runs in a double line, devotion to Rama and devotion to Sita; Guha, Maricha, Vibhishana, Lakshmana and Bharatha are the devotees of Rama. Even Surpanakha is a devotee of Rama. But there are some other characters in *Ramayana* who are the devotees of Sita. The difference between them is that Rama is the highest creative and sustaining final energy in male form and Sita the same energy in the form of a female.

Ravana may be said to be a devotee of Sita. The erotic sentiment prohibits us to think of him like this. But fundamentally, he is a devotee of Sita. He had taken a very critical, agrumentative and a derogatory path to achieve his object. He always looked upon Sita as the incarnation of Lakshmi, Durga, and Parvati. He was a great student of Srividya. He chose this most objectionable path to reach Sita. This needs much explanation. When we deal with Ravana, it will be made plain. His is a peculiar path to exculpate himself while incriminating Rama. He wilfully embarked himself on this perilous path. Sink or Swim.

□ □ □

There are three dolls—the first made of salt, the second made of cloth, and the third of stone. If these dolls are immersed in water, the first will become dissolved and lose its form, the second will absorb a large quantity of water but retain its form, and third will remain impervious to water. The first doll represents the man who merges his self in the universal and all-pervading Self and becomes one with It; he is the liberated man. The second represents the Bhakta or the true lover of God, who is full of Divine bliss and knowledge. And the third represents the worldly man who will not admit even a particle of true knowledge into his heart.

—Sri Ramakrishna

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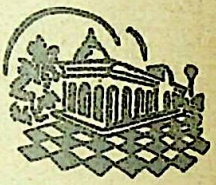

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Religion in the Light of Reason and Science

9

Buddhi Yoga or the Yoga of Intelligence

R. B. LAL

FAITH is a necessity of life and we use it more often than we realise. In all matters where some of the factors involved are unknown or uncertain, our course of action ultimately rests on faith—the faith that things will turn out the way we expect. Even science is based on the faith that Nature is orderly and ruled by law and will behave in future as it has done in the past. Faith in the form of hope is a source of strength and a sustainer of effort. Life would become intolerable if a man lacked faith in himself, in his destiny, in his friends, and in the case of many people, in God.

This, however, does not mean that faith is sufficient to meet all the needs of man. As we know, faith alone—that is faith unaccompanied by appropriate actions—cannot get us food or drink, clothing or shelter, knowledge or skill, goodness or character. Moreover, when beliefs differ, as they often do, what is there to decide which of them is right? As a matter of fact, reason, knowledge and effort are all indispensable like faith; and faith which contradicts or belittles them is positively harmful.

Both reason and faith are thus seen to be necessary. Their mixture in varying proportions is used in all walks of life. At one end is science which is essentially an intellectual and practical activity; at the other is conventional religion, which is mostly faith with very little of reason. But reason is primary and faith subsidiary. Faith cannot take the place of intelligence or knowledge. It is rightly brought in to fill the gaps in reasoning and knowledge. But where

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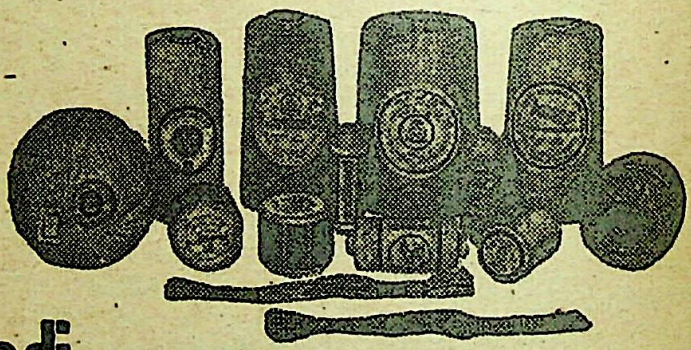

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certain knowledge is available or can be obtained, reason is the appropriate tool and not faith. At present knowledge is expanding fast; so faith is being pushed out steadily from many of its old strongholds to areas further and further away.

Faith has a legitimate role in religion. In fact, the two words are often used synonymously. But it is well to recognise that human credulity has its limits and these limits are being rapidly lowered under the impact of science. In the present age faith cannot survive as an antithesis of reason. Nor is the cause of religion advanced by insisting that unquestioning faith is the greatest virtue and its lack the worst sin, that even by the slightest doubt or surprise about a religious teaching man quickly brings the wrath of God upon himself. Faith must learn to live with reason, knowledge and effort and recognise them as the senior partners in the management of life.

The Place of Reason in Hinduism

The western religions are largely based on faith. They derive their authority from the private messages which certain lofty souls are believed to have received directly from God or his angels, thus placing them outside the pale of human intellect and discussion. For centuries Hinduism too has been ignoring reason and this is why evil practices have crept in. But if we examine the matter deeply we find that the seers of ancient India accorded the highest place to reason and intellect in the conduct of life—even in the field of religion. Thus the *Upanishads* have likened the human body to a chariot in which the individual soul is riding. The driver of this chariot is Buddhi or intellect, while the senses are its horses. The intellect is, therefore, the greatest among the assistants of the soul and is as necessary for man's spiritual progress as for his success and happiness in the world. The Vedas have many passages—apart from the famous Gayatri Mantra—emphasising the importance of an enlightened intellect.

> We meditate upon the supreme Light of that Effulgent Creator. May He inspire our intellect!
>
> O intellect, you are the foremost for us!
>
> O you desirous of being great, acquire knowledge!
>
> Endow us with perfect intelligence and wisdom, O Bounteous Lord!

In the *Gita*, Sri Krishna has repeatedly stressed the role of intelligence. He has coined a new term 'Buddhi Yoga' and given it the pride of place among all the systems of Yoga. For example, he says: "I am the intelligence of the intelligent." "Therefore, take refuge in Buddhi, O Arjuna." "Mentally dedicating all deeds to Me, having Me as the highest goal, resorting to Buddhi Yoga, do

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you ever fix your mind (mana) on Me."

Whatever one may like to accomplish in the world two things are indispensable—labour and intelligence. Therefore the teaching of the *Gita* starts with Karma Yoga and Buddhi Yoga. These two Yogas have a universal application and are, in fact, the foundation of all other Yogas. Their use is as necessary in the practice of meditation and japa as in that of medicine, law or teaching. Even the best of religious exercises cannot advance a man spiritually if carried out unintelligently or with evil intentions.

Buddhi Yoga requires the trained, developed and enlightened intellect to be equipped with various kinds of necessary knowledge, to be used for the conduct of life and for extending the frontiers of knowledge. According to a Biblical story Adam and Eve, with all their progeny, were severely punished for eating the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge. But Sri Krishna insists on knowledge and every variety of it. "Man", says the *Gita*, "can cross over all sin by the raft of knowledge." "There is no purifier in the world like knowledge." "When God wants to shower His grace on some one He gives him Buddhi Yoga, or the shining lamp of wisdom, by which he clearly sees his way through life and attains God."

Two remarkable verses of the *Gita* are worth mentioning here. One reads: All the Vedas are as useful to an enlightened Brahman as is a tank in a place covered all over with water. This verse is not intended, as some people think, to slight the Vedas or any section of them. It merely states the simple fact that great as are the Vedas, the total knowledge contained in them bears to the total volume of truth—known as well as unknown —the same ratio as a tank does to a vast, in fact, limitless, expanse of water. Truth is an attribute of God, even synonymous with Him, and as such is infinite like Him. Therefore Sri Krishna insists that the quest for truth should not stop with the Vedas but must go on unremittingly and endlessly.

The other verse says: When your Buddhi has escaped from this tangle of delusion, then shall you gain indifference to things heard and yet to be heard.

An enlightened man, that is one who has acquired a clear understanding of the essentials of his duties, need no longer be tied to the apron strings of holy men or holy books. He must think for himself, identify the problems confronting him and use his own knowledge and experience to solve them. As if echoing the teachings of the *Gita*, the *Yoga Vasishtha* says: "God Vishnu, however long propitiated and however pleased, cannot bestow self-knowledge on one who does not think for himself. Reasonable words even of a child ought to be accepted, and those

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even of the Creator (Brahma) are to be discarded like straw if they are otherwise."

Identical views were expressed by one of the greatest saints of modern India, Swami Rama Tirtha. In his book *The Heart of Rama* he wrote: "Accept not a religion because it is the oldest; it being the oldest is no proof of its being the true one. Sometimes the oldest houses ought to be pulled down and the oldest clothes must be changed.... Accept not a religion because it comes from a great ascetic, from a man who has renounced everything.... Accept not a religion because it comes from a person whose character was the highest; often times people of the grandest character have failed in expounding the truth.... Accept a thing and believe in a religion on its own merits. Examine it yourself. Sift it."

Intelligence and Knowledge

One important function of the intellect is to discriminate between higher and lower values, for example, the real and the seeming good, what is worth doing and what is not, truth and falsehood, the important and the unimportant, the immediate requirement and what can be postponed, good and evil, fact and opinion, appearance and reality. The power of discrimination, or the critical faculty, enables a man to choose one out of a number of alternatives available to him, to arrive at proper decisions and to make correct judgements about men and matters. Discrimination is the acid test of the intellect and this is the criterion employed by Sri Krishna to classify the intellect into three grades. He says in the *Gita*: "The intellect which knows what is right action and what is right cessation of action; what must be done and what ought not to be done, what is fear and what constitutes fearlessness, what is bondage and what is liberation, is Sattvic (highest class). That intelligence by which one understands incorrectly what is right and what is wrong, what must be done and what ought not to be done, partakes of Rajas (medium grade). That reason which, enveloped in ignorance, thinks the wrong to be right, and regards all things contrary, is Tamasic" (lowest grade).

Grades of Knowledge

In three short verses of the *Gita*, Sri Krishna has explained the criteria for judging the intrinsic worth of any piece of knowledge. He says: "That knowledge by which man sees one imperishable entity in all beings, undivided among the divided, know that knowledge to be Sattvic. But that knowledge which regards the manifold existence in all beings as separate and different from one another, know that knowledge to be Rajasic. While that knowledge by which one clings to each one thing as if it were the whole, without reason without grasping the rea-

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lity. narrow, that knowledge is declared to be Tamasic."

These are words of profound wisdom for evaluating ideas, whether in the field of knowledge or in the affairs of life.

The motto of the lowest type of knowledge is—This alone is true: of the second grade—Either this or that: and of the highest grade—Both this and that. The three grades stand respectively for opposition, isolation and cooperation.

The lowest or dark variety of knowledge is intolerant of other knowledge or differing views on the subject. It discourages independent thinking and thereby blocks the growth of knowledge. It engenders narrow-mindedness, bigotry and fanaticism.

In the medium grade of knowledge all creatures, all objects, all bits of knowledge are seen as separate and independent entities with nothing in common. Science and religion are divided into watertight compartments; and so are matter and energy, living and non-living, plant and animal and the differrent nations and religions of the world. All branches of knowledge stand eternally apart with no possibility of integration and with nothing to be gained by integration—if it were possible. The interests of each individual, each nation, each religion are entirely separate from those of the rest. This way of thinking, characterizing the second grade of knowledge, takes the diversity of the world as the ultimate reality and makes no effort to dig deeper for any greater truth.

The best of enlightened grade of knowledge is that which takes note of the variety in the world and also of the unity that lies behind it. Its wide vision takes in many things at one sweep and sees them all in harmony, in cooperation and converging towards one point. Thus in its infancy science saw different forms of matter and energy, living and non-living. particle and wave as sharply divided, each from the other; but with every advance it sees the lines of demarcation thinning out and multiplicity giving place to unity. Science is in the lowest grade, or in its infancy, when it regards other branches of knowledge, particularly religion, as useless, false or superstitious. When science rises to a higher level of vision, it treats religion with indifference, as an entirely separate and independent disciple. Scie ce only reaches fulfilment or maturity when it accepts religion as a useful nay indispensable, collaborator in the service of mankind and promotes the growth and dissemination of healthy religion.

These remarks apply with equal force to religions. It is the lowest or dark form of religion which cannot stand other religions or art or science. We have already seen how religion in its narrowness led to wars and for many centuries stifled the growth of science. When

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religion reaches adolescence it tolerates art and science but views them with suspicion lest they should invade its sanctity. When a religion reaches maturity, it begins to appreciate the good in other religions, it welcomes art and science and recognises a variety of paths to reach the same goal.

God is a lover of variety. So is a lover of knowledge. He welcomes new ideas, new solutions of old problems, new ways of doing things. He is a great learner and always keeps his eyes on the look-out and his ears on the *qui vive* for new truth. He regards every new thought, every exception to accepted theory, every new fact or phenomenon not covered by known laws, not as enemies of present knowledge; but as the first glimmer of new vistas of truth.

Practical Application

The first phase in the practice of Buddhi Yoga is education, which trains the mind to concentrate, to acquire knowledge and think for itself. Thereafter the individual develops skill or efficiency, preferably superb skill, in his calling. Another very important aspect of Buddhi Yoga is the extension of various kinds of knowledge, such as science, technology, arts and letters. But to become Yoga all acquisitions and resources of man have to be devoted to the service of God and the good of his creatures. Unless this precauiton is taken, knowledge, wealth and power easily turn to evil. and some of the cleverest persons have been the most crooked. Therefore, along with knowledge and skill we must also cultivate character and goodness. This is where religion must step in to play its part.

But this cannot be done by a religion which is limited to faith, prayer and worship. Therefore it is necessary to widen the definition of religion so as to include not only worship but also self-development. self-discipline, self-dedication and the proper performance of all duties.

Religion needs to rejuvenate itself with an infusion of science and common sense. Each of its precepts must answer some crucial tests. Is it reasonable? Is it consistent with other relevant and well-established doctrines? Does it accord with the facts of common experience and the lessons of history? Is it practicable? Is it good for the individual as well as society? Will it promote the best interests of mankind if practised by a great many people? These are some of the criteria which will help to sort out religious teachings which are sensible and beneficial from others which harm humanity by setting man against man, by encouraging fanaticism, persecution and wars, by promoting permissiveness and irresponsibility or by exalting poverty, weakness or stupidity as passports to heaven.

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It is intelligence which distinguishes man from the lower animals. But his talents are mostly in a potential form like a seed. He cannot outgrow his animal nature or even meet the challenges of daily life without a trained and developed intellect. In the absence of a mature mind even the best of religious principles are likely to be misunderstood and misapplied. This is how faith has displaced right conduct; and evenmindedness, which is correctly applicable to one's own pleasure and pain, has made many people indifferent to the sufferings of fellow men. For the same reason religion is largely other-worldly and supernatural in its origin, in its disciplines as well as its aims. Occult powers, mystic experiences and superconscious states have come to be regarded as the essence of spirituality, though it is well known that even demons can boast of them.

It is high time we take a rational and realistic view of religion and shift the emphasis from faith and esoteric exercises to the common activities of life; from subjective and private criteria of holiness to others which are objective and acceptable to the people at large; from individual salvation to public good; from extra-sensory powers to super-excellence in one's own profession. The goal of religion should be restated as the spiritualisation of man and the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth by voluntary effort rather than the admission, after death, of a few unwilling and undeserving persons to a remote heaven of effortless ease and unrestricted pleasure. Religious leaders should possess not only faith and devotion but also wisdom and vision if these objectives are to be realized.

(To be continued)

Treat
PILES
early
with trusted
HADENSA
ointment
—avoid surgery!

Vedanta recognizes no sin; it only recognizes error; and the greatest error, says the Vedanta is to say that you are weak, that you are a sinner, a miserable creature and that you have no power and you cannot do this and that.

—Swami Vivekananda

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Shrigopalji Nevatia

S. RAMAKRISHNAN

A LIFE is to be truly judged not by its length but by the measure of its achievements and the quality of its contents. And by both these standards Shrigopalji Nevatia lived a "full life."

Bottled up within his frail frame was infinite energy which was insistently seeking expression in diverse channels—business and industry, art and literature, educational and cultural work, social and philanthropic activities. In every one of these fields that attracted his attention, Shrigopalji has left his mark.

As one who has known Shrigopalji for nearly 30 years and viewed him with worshipful reverence, I am inclined to feel this way. His physical frame would have perhaps lasted longer, had he been a man of limited interests. But no. This was not to be. He was born to be one of those rare children of God, keen on simultaneously playing on many strings of life. And he did play well on all strings.

But despite the broad spectrum of activities which claimed his diligent attention, he himself was far from being a self-centred, bragging, flamboyant personality as most men of his means and stature tend to be. On the contrary, he was a perfect example of quiet efficiency; never, never a talker but ever and always a doer. He was a perfectionist of the Michaelangelo type, exacting in his standards, with the result that whatever he touched attained sheen and lustre of a lasting kind. The distinct Shrigopalji stamp is evident in the business houses which he fathered or was in charge of, in the temples, the hospitals, the theatres he helped build or administer, or in the articles and short stories he wrote.

Kulapati Munshiji had counted on Shrigopalji as one of the strongest pillars of the Bhavan, particularly after his own passing away and the trust and confidence reposed on him by Munshiji were more than fulfilled by his Shrigopalji, though much of his "silent" services in the cause of the Bhavan would remain unknown to the outside world.

I shall merely recall here a few of the incidents as they crowd my

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mind and let them tell their own story of how Shrigopalji had become so much of Bhavan's life and part of it.

☆

Five minutes before life ebbed out of Munshiji's body at sunset on February 8, 1971, Shrigopalji was by his bed-side, along with other near and dear ones. And after Munshiji's death when most of us were left frozen with sorrow, Shrigopalji, calm and unperturbed, spent the whole night in the Bhavan, consoled the grief-striken and meticulously planned and organised the funeral arrangements.

And two years earlier, when the Bhavan's Registrar, Shri Sivaramakrishnan, underwent a major seven-hour operation for aorta-burst at the Bombay Hospital, Shrigopalji was present at the hospital throughout. Finally, when even the best of medical attention could not save Shri Sivaramakrishnan who was just 42, a benevolent Shrigopalji silently made all arrangements for the last rites.

Like uncle Moon whose soothing rays fall alike on everyone, Shrigopalji's loving care extended to everyone who came under the sphere of his benign umbrella.

On one occasion, he heard about the miserable plight of one of Bhavan's peons, Shri Vaman Parab, who was afflicted with TB. Shrigopalji lovingly intervened, said he was connected with a TB sanatorium near Poona, and quickly and quietly arranged for the treatment of Parab, leaving us amazed.

Similarly, when Shri Ramanatha Shivratan Kahar, the oldest employee of the Bhavan and head of our Class IV employees, retired on February 15, this year, Shrigopalji was in the forefront to honour Ramanath with the presentation of a shawl and a laudatory speech, though Ramanath was not even a white-collared clerk.

One day, in 1972, a *Bhavan's Journal* reader from South India, whom I did not know personally, telephoned to me to discuss in person about a donation which he intended to give to the Bhavan.

Flying from Bombay and meeting the person, I was in for a big surprise. The spontaneity and quantum of the donation were too good to be true. I had to be wary. Was there any catch anywhere?

I phoned to Shrigopalji and sought his personal presence. The everbusy Shrigopalji, who had to look after the interests of scores of business and industrial houses, kept aside all his work, and flew from Bombay the same noon.

To cut a long story short, the matter was discussed threadbare, everything was settled smoothly, the Bhavan was richer by the munificence of a great soul, and we two flew back to Bombay the very evening.

Even when the shadow of death loomed large over himself, Shrigopalji's concern for others did not leave him. On September 9—just five days prior to the fatal

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stroke—myself and Shri Varadarajan, the General Manager of Bhavan's Press, of which Shrigopalji was the Chairman, went to his residence, "Ratnakar." When I reported that Shri Varadarajan was suffering from high blood pressure, Shrigopalji advised him to immediately proceed on leave and offered to make all arrangements for his treatment. "You are one of us and don't worry about anything," he told him. Not only that. He consoled Shri Rajan by recalling his own history of blood pressure ailment. And he further sought to cheer him up by saying that Gandhiji himself had suffered from blood pressure from his early life and that he used to chew the leaves of Rauwolfia Serpentina, the celebrated Indian herb, which was brought to the attention of the Western medical world by Dr. Rustom Jal Vakil, and which has yielded the standard drugs in the treatment of hypertension and blood pressure.

I must also not omit to mention here the *stitaprajna* attitude Shrigopa ji had attained during the evening of his eventful life.

On the morning of September 9 he had received a telephonic message from Madras communicating the news of the death of his cousin whom he loved very much. He had died in a car accident while on his way to Rameswaram.

Briefly dwelling on the unhappy event, Shrigopalji observed that God held within his power the length of a man's life and that all human endeavour was of no avail in changing His Will.

Then he recalled how Sri Jamnalalji Bajaj and himself had narrowly escaped death in the 1920s when, while returning after seeing off Gandhiji at the then Colaba station, their car turned turtle in front of the famous Bhikaji Behram's Parsi Well at the corner of Bombay's Cross Maidan.

He also recalled the famous remarks of Rajaji, who was against linguistic vivisection of India. When a linguistic fanatic threatened him at an AICC session, the Bhishmapitamaha said: "I would like to oblige everyone, but in the matter of life and death, I am helpless."

I shall but recall just one more incident which would amply demonstrate that even when death was so close to him, Shrigopalji remained *a man of action*, and more than that, a *man of compassion*.

At about 2 p.m. on September 14, 1975, the day on which he had the fatal attack of cerebral haemorrhage which signalled his lapsing into coma, I received a telephone call from him. He told me: "I am a trustee of an institution concerned with the welfare of the deaf and dumb. Some fund raising has to be done for it. Please fix up a good artiste for a benefit performance and let me know."

Around 8.30 p.m. on that day—he used to punctually go to bed at 9—I rang up "Ratnakar" and awaited to hear the low, soft voice

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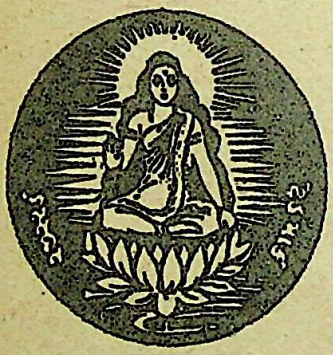
of Shrigopalji. But the phone was picked up by Hariprasadji, his nephew, who broke to me the sad news that, at 7-45 p.m., sitting in front of the dining table Shrigopalji had had a severe attack.

And one day during Shrigopalji's last days in the hospital, when I recalled to his sons their father's last thought about the welfare of the deaf and dumb, they immediately wrote out a cheque for the institution. Tears welled up in my eyes. Verily the father is alive in his children.

One Shrigopalji came into this world and while leaving this world he has left behind two potential Shrigopaljis. Yes, as Gandhiji said on a similar occasion: "In the midst of death, life persists"—Amen. □□□

In a narrow society there is depth and intensity of spirituality. The narrow stream is very rapid. In a catholic society, along with the breadth of vision we find a proportionate loss in depth and intensity. But the life of Sri Ramakrishna upsets all records of history. It is a remarkable phenomenon that in Sri Ramakrishna there has been an assemblage of ideas deeper than the sea and vaster than the skies.

—Swami Vivekananda



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Shri S. G. Nevatia's Services Recalled

A largely attended public meeting was held on October 1, 1975 at the Birla Matushri Sabhagar, Bombay, to condole the demise of Shri Shrigopalji Nevatia, Honorary Secretary of the Bombay Hospital Trust and also Honorary Secretary of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and Chairman of its Press Committee for nearly 30 years.

The meeting was presided over by Shri Shriyansprasad Jain, Chairman of the Bombay Hospital Trust and Honorary Treasurer of the Bhavan.

Among the speakers were Shri Ramakrishna Bajaj, Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary of the Bhavan, Shri Rameshwar Saboo, Dr. J. S. Mishra, Shri R. V. Murthy, Dr. K. K. Datey, Prof. M. P. Gandhi, Shri Lalu Shah, Dr. L. M. Hiranandani, Shri Narayan Dutt, Matron Miss J. M. Benjamine, Dr. V. V. Jadhav and Shri Narvekar.

The following resolution was adopted, all standing:

This public meeting of the Trustees, Members of the Board of Management, Members of the Medical profession, Nursing and administrative staff attached to the Bombay Hospital Medical Research Centre Birla Matushri Sabhagar and of several other institutions with which the late Shri Shrigopal Nevatia had been closely associated, places on record the sincere, silent and substantial services of the late Shri Nevatia to all these institutions in general and to the Bombay Hospital in particular.

Whilst noting its sense of grievous loss due to the irreparable void caused by his sudden demise, this meeting expresses its feelings of deep anguish and profound sorrow to his beloved wife Smt. Subhadra Nevatia and other members of the grieving family.

A man of versatile genius, Shri Nevatia made a mark in various fields of life. As an industrialist, he played a notable role in the industrial growth of the country. The numerous industrial institutions spread over various parts of the country symbolise his zeal for the economic uplift of the country.

As a practical and sagacious organiser, he would be long remembered for his contribution in the field of industry and trade. As an enlightened man Shri Nevatia played a handsome role in the revival and propagation of the various branches of Indian Culture.

His keen interest in the creative activities of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is known to all. As founder-editor of 'Navneet,' a culture digest in Hindi, Gujarati and Marathi, he brought the gems of knowledge within the easy reach of the public at large.

As a Hon. Secretary of the Bombay Hospital Trust and its associate institution, the Medical Research Centre, he rendered most valuable services not only to the cause of medical research but also to the services of the suffering humanity as a whole. The reputation of Bombay Hospital for drawing patients from all parts of the country and even from abroad for treatment is due to the ceaseless efforts of the founding fathers of this unique institution among whom Shri Nevatia occupies a pride of place.

Our humble prayer to the Almighty is to grant eternal peace to the departed noble soul and sufficient strength to all his family members to bear this great loss with courage and fortitude.

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GANDHIAN LITERATURE

The best way to commemorate Gandhiji is to read his books. Here are some choice books by Gandhiji and also on Gandhiji by eminent personalities who were closely associated with him.

TITLE	AUTHOR	PRICE Rs. P.
GANDHI'S VIEW OF LIFE	—Chandrashanker Shukla	3.00
GANDHIJI'S TEACHINGS & PHILOSOPHY	—C. Rajagopalachari	2.00
QUIET BATTLE	—Ed. By Mulford Q. Sibley	4.00
GANDHIAN ALTERNATIVE TO WESTERN SOCIALISM	—V. K. R. V. Rao (Popular)	1.00
	(Deluxe)	4.00
CIVILIAN DEFENCE : AN INTRODUCTION	—Ed. By Gene Sharp, Adam Roberts & T.K. Mahadevan	12.00
GANDHI : HIS RELEVANCE FOR OUR TIMES	—Ed. By G. Ramachandran & T. K. Mahadevan	15.00
GANDHI AND BOMBAY	—K Gopalaswami	50.00
GANDHI : THE SPIRITUAL SEEKER	—R. R. Diwakar	1.50
GANDHI : A DETAILED CHRONOLOGY	—C. B. Dalal	30.00
GANDHI LOOKS AT LEPROSY	—M. S. Mehendale	5.00
QUEST FOR GANDHI	—Ed. By G. Ramachandran & T. K. Mahadevan	18.00
SAGA OF SATYAGRAHA	—R. R. Diwakar (Popular)	7.00
	(Deluxe)	9.00
TALKING OF GANDHIJI	—Compiled by Francis Watson	1.50
WHITER INDIA ? (Gandhi Marg Symposium)	—Several Contributors	1.00
TOWARDS LASTING PEACE	—Mahatma Gandhi	3.00
SOCIALISM OF MY CONCEPTION	—Mahatma Gandhi	3.00
SOCIALISM OF MY CONCEPTION	—do—	2.00
SATYASHODHANAM (Gandhiji's Autobiography-In Sanskrit)		25.00
AND 24 TITLES OF POCKET GANDHI SERIES	—By Gandhiji (Each)	3.00

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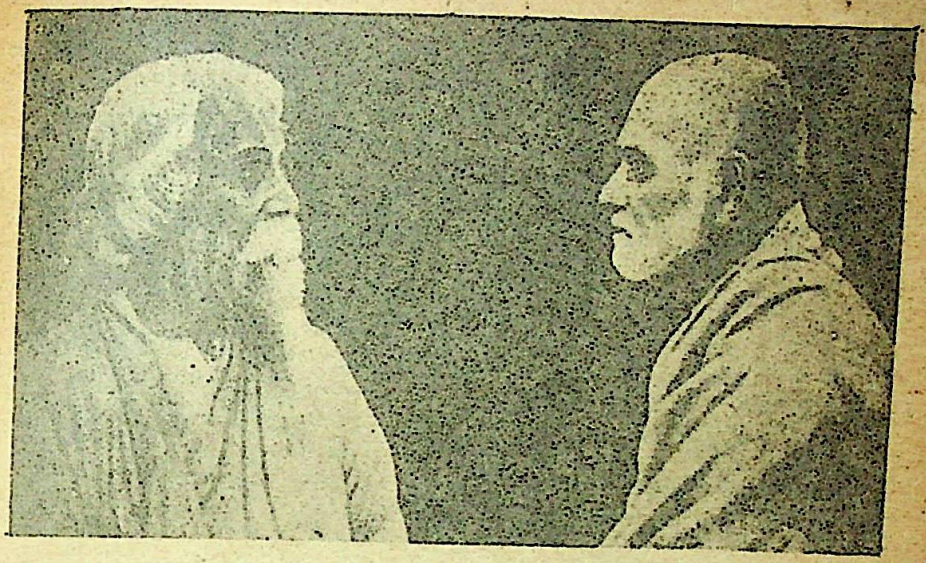

Sri Narayana Guru—A. S. P. Ayyar

ONCE in a while, a unique being arises in this world for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, filled with compassion for all, by the Grace of God, and he is born in the community and country which needs him most. Such a unique being was Sri Narayana Guru, the prophet of Kerala.

Our India or Bharat is a very peculiar country. It has no respect for great conquerors, men who massacre millions of their fellowmen in their insane mania for conquest. Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Chenghiz Khan, Attila, Tamerlane, Napolean, Hitler, none of these was born in the land between the Himalayas and the sea. Nor does India respect men of mere wealth. Rockefeller, Croesus, Ford and Carnegie were not born here. India respects only the Sons of God who go round preaching Absolute Truth (*Satyannaasti param padam*—there is nothing greater than Truth), Absolute Love for all created beings (*sarva bhoota hite rata*—engaged in loving care for all created beings), Absolute Purity (*samodamastapa saucham*—absolutely pure in thought, word and deed, and devoid of the least trace of wickedness or sin), and Absolute Unselfishness (*nirmamo nirahankara*—devoid of the sense of my and mine and of the least trace of the ego) and who have attained the Peace of God (*paraam santi*). These sons of God stretch across India's history from Rama and Krishna, Buddha and Mahavira, in

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Place : Bhavan's Auditorium, Chowpatty.

Time : 8-00 p.m.

Participating Artistes :

Pandit Jasraj, Ustad Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan, Ustad Latafat Hussain Khan, Pandit Ram Narain, Smt. Malini Rajurkar, Smt. Shobha Gurtu, Shri Debu Chaudhuri, Shri Pradeep Kumar Chatterjee and Shri Hariprasad Chaurasia

Rates : Season tickets for two days :

Rs. 50, 25, 10 and 5

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the hoary past through, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa, Nanak, Ramananda, Kabir, Meera, Chaitanya, Tukaram and Ramdas in mediaeval times to Ramakrishna, Sai Baba, Ramana, Aurobindo and Narayana Guru of modern times, like the stainless peaks of eternal snow in her own God-given frontier of the Himalayas stretching across her northern boundary like a veritable divine measuring rod, as proclaimed by Kalidasa. These great souls are born because Hinduism, unlike Islam, Christianity and other religious, has no known founder, or indeed any one founder, and so, its living truths have to be proclaimed by living sages in every age, in the spirit of that age.

These Mahatmas proclaim "God alone is true: all other things are relatively untrue: and God is within you, seated in your heart (*Brahma Satyam; jagan mithya, jeevo Brahmaiva naapara. Iswara sarvabhootaanaam hriddese Arjuna thishthathi*). They own nothing, no, not even their own time, it too being at the disposal of the world. They sacrifice even their privacy, the last vestige of private property, and live in public all the time. They sacrifice their lives either by dedicating them for the service of men, or even by shedding their blood to cement the bricks for the building the Mansion of Liberty. (*Veedu* or *Mokshapura*).

God says, in the holy Koran: "To every community I send a messenger speaking the language of the people to whom he is sent in order that he may explain his message to them." Sri Narayana Guru was such a messenger sent to the Ezhavas speaking their language, Malayalam. He explained his message to them in Malayalam. And what a message! "One God, one Dharma, one Religion, one Caste!" Can there be a higher message? Narayana Guru was a true Mahatma. He saw all humanity as one, did not hate any one, and was for virtue wherever found, and condemned vice wherever found. The truth is that in all ages, at all times, and in all countries, in spite of the pressure of tribal, communal, social, political and national handicaps, there have been Mahatmas who are not at all blinded by appearance but see Truth wholly and steadily. The man of the world, whether civilised or uncivilised, is always blinded by appearances. The man of reality is not. The man of reality sees the oneness of mankind, he sees the oneness of all animal life, he sees the oneness of the universe, and at the risk of his life he preaches the Truth. He is laughed at, he is fought against, and he is sometimes killed (like Christ). But reality conquers. Mankind, in the end, sees that he is right and that his opponents are wrong. Only in this way has mankind made the progress it has made.

Five things in Sri Narayana Guru must strike any one. Firstly, he laid his foundations deep, in

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the deathless and ageless Vedas and ancient lore and Sanskrit learning, hitching the wagon to the stars while casting out the dross and keeping only the pure gold. The intolerance of the high caste Hindus did not make him discard the scriptures they followed, though he ruthlessly eschewed the superstitions and excrescences.

Secondly, he made the Ezhavas construct temples all over Kerala as a parallel system to that of the caste Hindus who would not allow them to enter their temples and worship. He asked the Ezhavas themselves to officiate as priests in those temples instead of employing Brahmins. To a Brahmin mathadhipati who objected that Ezhavas could not act as priests to Siva, one of his disciples gave the famous reply, "It is not the Brahmin Siva we are worshipping but the Thiya (Ezhava) Siva!"

Thirdly, he threw open these temples to the Parīahs and other castes lower than the Thiyas, thus proving that his passion for equality for his tribe did not arise from snobbery, to a desire to hobnob with the high-caste Brahmins and Nairs but from a religious passion for *samatva*. It is significant that he attached little importance to the humbugging tea parties and dinner parties of those days wherein caste Hindus patronisingly invited prominent Ezhavas in order to placate them and make them not lead their brethren in a fight for equality.

Fourthly, his insistence on work and right work, as urged by the *Gita*, is remarkable. He asked the Thiyas to work hard and to abandon toddy-tapping as not a rightful occupation. They were robbed of the cocoanut, the most valuable fruit imaginable by the high caste Hindus and made to tap toddy and get drunk in order to forget the robbery. Sri Narayana Guru wanted to restore the pure conditions and occupations of old.

Fifthly, and lastly, Sri Narayana Guru held that this world was only a probation for the next and that man was capable of infinite perfection and could become one with God by proper *karma, jnana, dhyana* and *bhakti*, guided by a proper guru and with the grace of God. He acted as a powerful check on irreligion, atheism and crass materialism. May he watch over the destinies of his beloved Kerala and the Secular Republic of India and see that they keep on the right track of Belief in God and Service to Man! □ □ □

Your country requires heroes; be heroes. Stand firm like a rock. Truth always triumphs. What India wants is a new electric fire to stir up a fresh vigour in the national veins. Be brave, be brave; man dies but once. My disciples must not be cowards. I hate cowards.

—Swami Vivekananda

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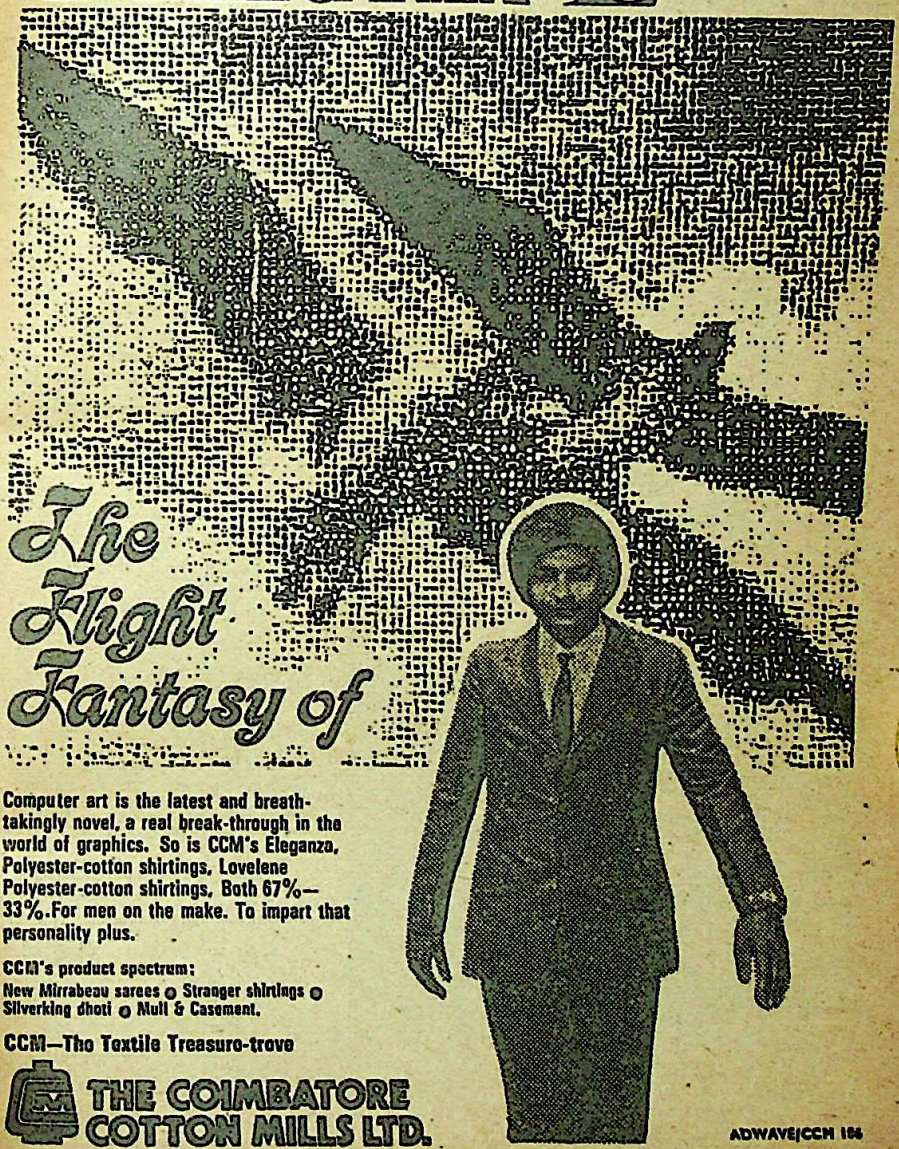

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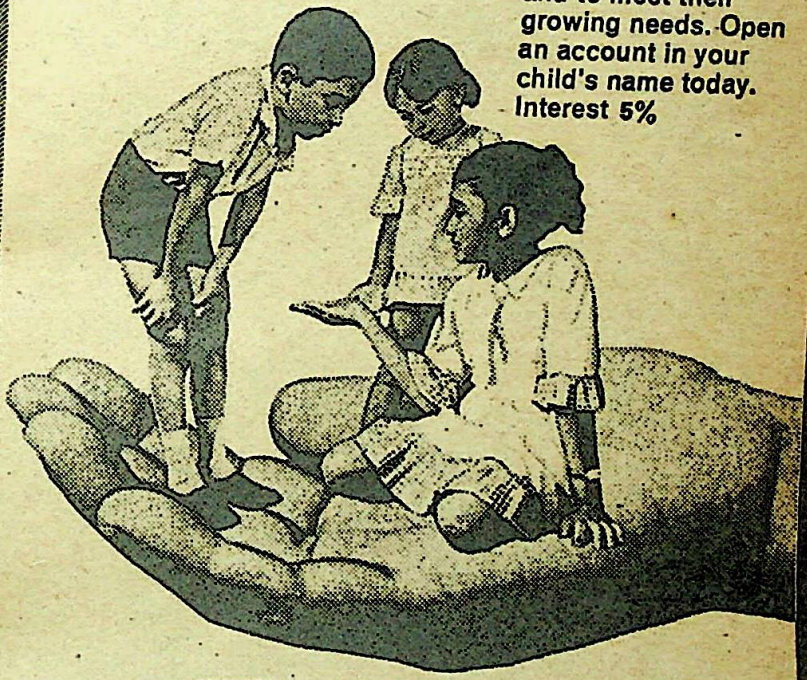

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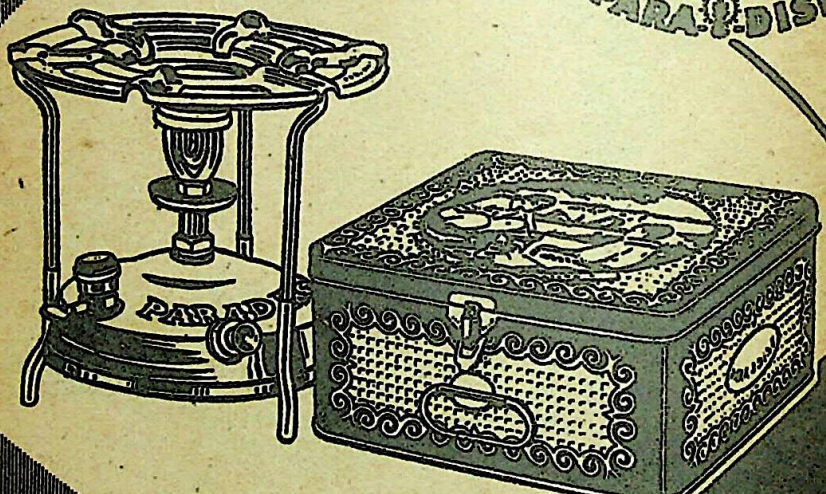

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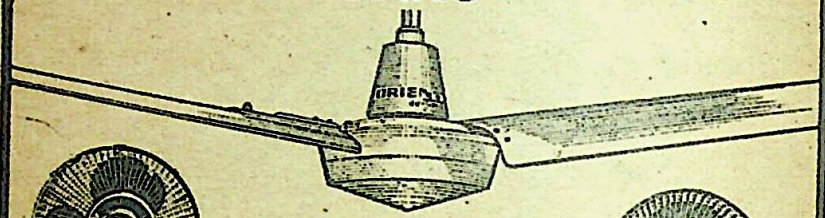

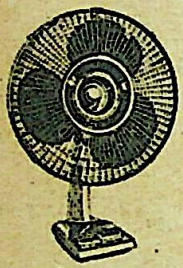

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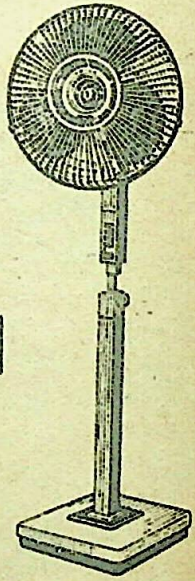

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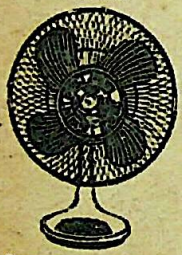

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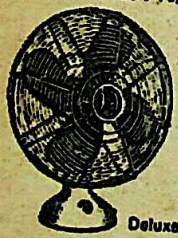

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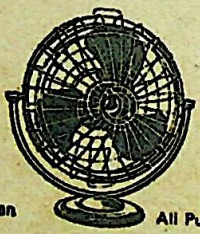

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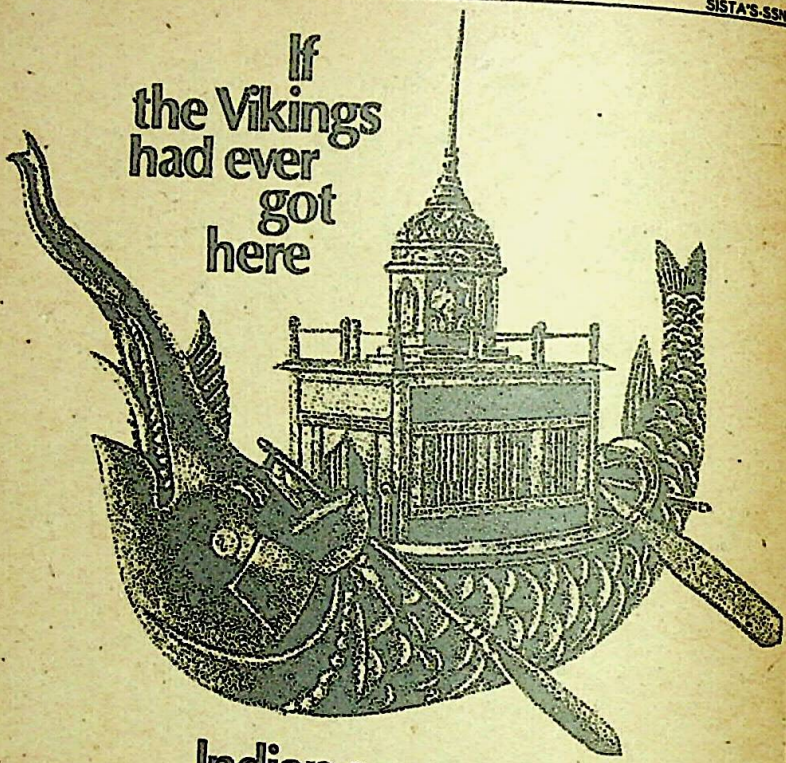

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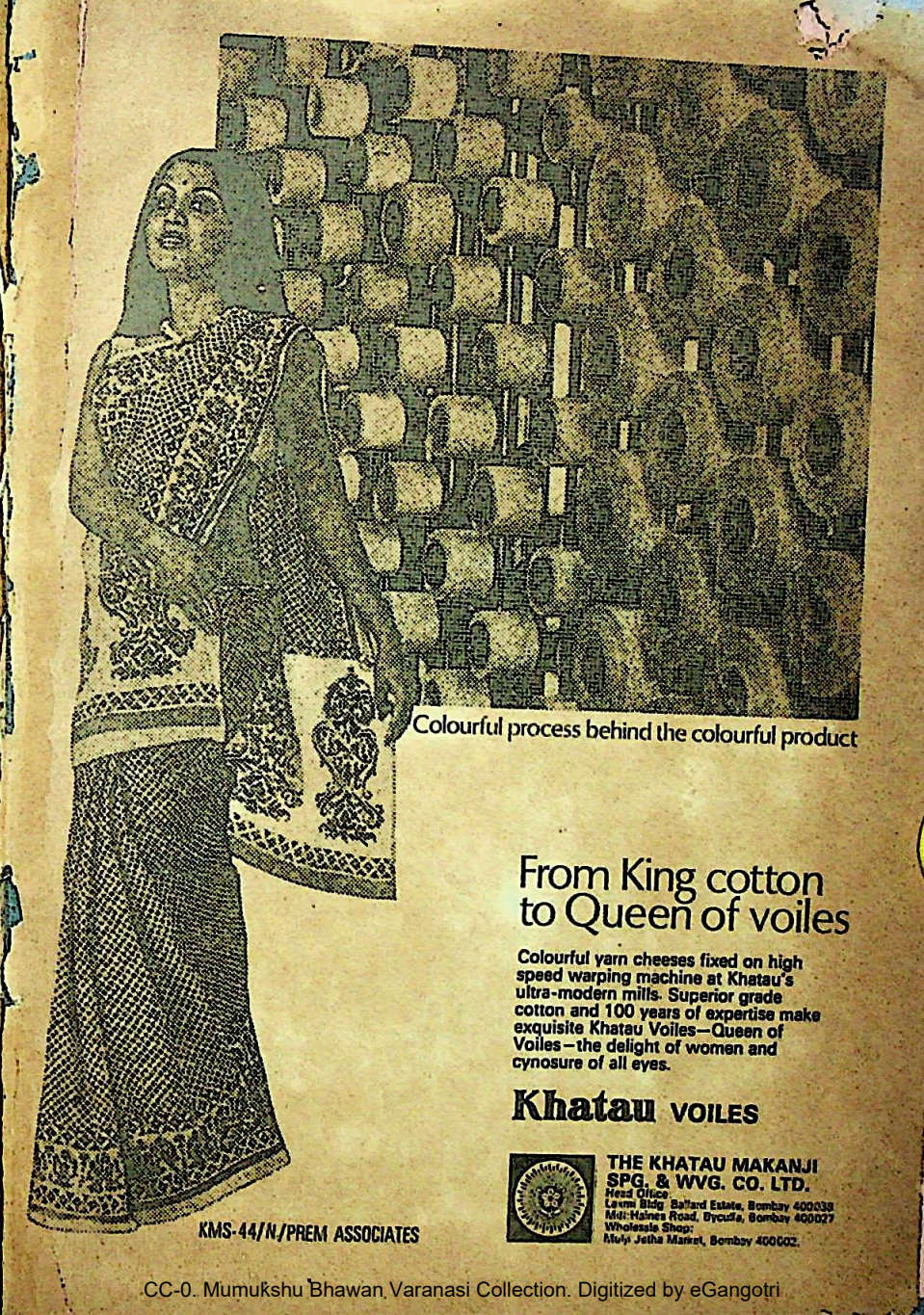

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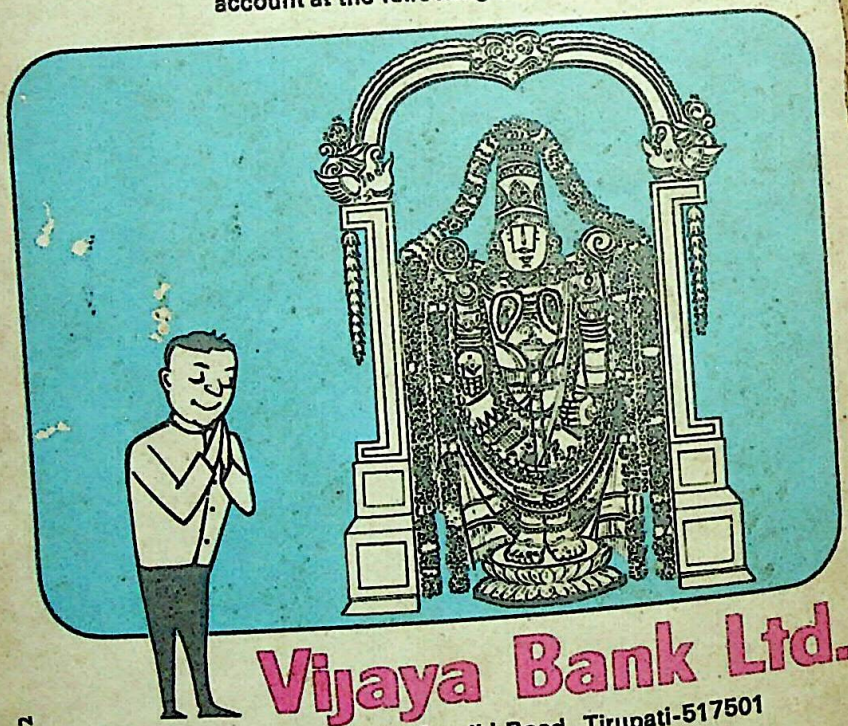

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